



May 12, 2014

To: Mike O'Dowd
Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project
Project Manager

From: Nathaniel Curtis
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RE: **MassDOT Highway Division
Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project
2nd Public Information Meeting
Meeting Notes of May 1, 2014**

Overview

On May 1, 2014 members of the Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project team and MassDOT staff associated with the job held the second public information meeting at Cambridge City Hall at the request of the Cambridge City Council. An initial public information meeting had been held on April 10, 2014 in Allston. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project to the Cambridge City Council and residents. The meeting also provided participants with opportunity to ask questions of MassDOT's project team. The meeting was attended by approximately 23 people including Councilor E. Denise Simmons, Councilor and State Representative Timothy J. Toomey, Jr. State Representative Jay Livingstone, and Senator William Brownsberger. The meeting represents one of many which will continue to take place to inform the community about the project throughout the course of the conceptual design phase.

While the meeting summarized herein was lightly attended, the overall audience was generally positive. Many of themes articulated in this session were similar to those heard on the 10th of April. Concerns specific to Cambridge included the issue of noise from the Massachusetts Turnpike impacting the area around the Morse School and the strong desire to improve this condition in any future reconfiguration of the Allston Interchange. Expressed strongly was the wish for Cambridge to be represented on the taskforce working with MassDOT to develop an implementable redesign for the interchange. At the time of this writing, Cambridge Transportation Program Manager, Bill Deignan, has joined the taskforce.

Meeting Minutes¹

Presentation

C: State Representative Jay Livingstone (SRJL): Thank you all for coming out tonight. As you know, this meeting is regarding the I-90 viaduct in Allston but it also has the potential to significantly impact Cambridge. For this reason, State Representative and Councilor Tim Toomey, Councilor E. Denise Simmons, I, and the City of Cambridge invited MassDOT to come tonight and make their presentation. Without further ado, I'll turn it over to MassDOT's Michael O'Dowd who is the project manager for this project and many other important projects in the Commonwealth.

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

C: Michael O'Dowd (MOD): Good evening ladies and gentleman. My name is Michael O'Dowd. We are here tonight to present the Allston Interchange project. I believe many of you are already familiar with this project. Our intent to improve the Allston interchange and make modifications to the interchange ramps where they connect onto Cambridge Street. We see an opportunity for a significant amount of improvements and much of this is occasioned by the fact that the elevated viaduct section of I-90 heading west from the BU Bridge and Commonwealth Avenue is significantly deteriorated. This is one of the issues that we need to address promptly. The second issue driving this project is that in the near future MassDOT will implement All Electronic Tolling (AET). This will free up space at all of the toll plazas and booths that you currently see along the Turnpike. In this particular area, we are focusing on removing those tolls and as a result, looking at the improvements we can make to the mainline of I-90. The tolls currently create a lot of congestion during the AM and PM peak hours and we see this as an opportunity to realign the I-90 mainline as a result of the Turnpike plazas and booths no longer being required.

We have all become use to seeing containers at the CSX rail yard for many years. If you've recently noticed, they are no longer there. CSX has discontinued their operations at the rail yard and have moved further west towards Worcester. Once again, this opens up the opportunity for us to take back some of that area that was utilized for the containers at the CSX rail yard and straighten out the dogleg arch of the I-90 mainline. In the fall of 2013, Governor Patrick came out and said that this was a project he had serious concerns for and wanted to assure that this project was undertaken in a timely fashion. Since November 2013, I have been working to get out to some of the neighborhoods in the Allston/Brighton areas and speak with representatives and residents to get an understanding of what their concerns are for the project, what they would like to see for a project of this size, how it could improve the neighborhood and how it could incorporate transportation opportunities along the I-90 mainline. We have received a lot of good feedback. A couple of weeks ago we held a public information meeting at the Jackson Mann School in Allston and we were approached by your representatives and asked if we could also do a similar, smaller type of presentation for the residents of Cambridge which is why we are here tonight.

With me are the project team designers and project managers from TetraTech, Ed Ionata and Chris Calnan. Handling public outreach is Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis from Howard/Stein-Hudson. Ed can touch on some of the additional designers who are part of the consultant team and who will be handling various aspects of the project including civil, traffic, structural and environmental issues. We have a very good team comprised of people who I have worked with in the past and I am very confident we will have a successful project. Per the direction of Secretary Davey, we have established a taskforce team that is heavily dominated by a local people who are most impacted that live in the Allston area. The taskforce meetings will begin next week and from that point forward we will be scheduling bi-weekly meetings. Depending on how much information we are able to gather the meetings may end up being every third week. I'm now going to introduce Ed Ionata who will take us through the presentation and afterwards, we'll be happy answer any questions or concerns you may have.

C: Ed Ionata (EI): Thanks Mike. If anyone wants to come up closer to see a bit more there are available seats up front. Are the microphones working?

A: Councilor E. Denise Simmons (CDS): The microphones are working, just push the green button.

C: EI: Okay great, thank you. What we would like to cover in this presentation is a quick overview of the public involvement project team, we'll take a look at what we've defined as the project area, we'll discuss some of the reasons for the project and potential transportation improvements, then we'll transition to the process and scheduling timeline and finally, Chris will come up and walk you through three of the earlier concepts that have been developed. In terms of ongoing public involvement, we've already begun the process and will continue our coordination with abutting municipalities. Nate will be managing the project website and there will be routine updates throughout the entire length of the project. I believe the information in this slideshow is already up there, is that correct Nate?

C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NNC): The site hasn't launched quite yet.²

C: El: Okay, the information in tonight's presentation will be available shortly on the project website. Additional public outreach tools include web and social media updates, stakeholder database inquires and the assembly of the taskforce team which Mike touched on earlier. The taskforce represents neighborhood residents, transportation stakeholders, City of Boston representatives, educational institutions, medical institutions, business and community officials, elected officials, construction industries and civic organizations. It is a large taskforce with quite a few people on it and we wanted to start early in the process before we proceed beyond some of the cartoon-like concepts that we have already developed.

MassDOT's project team includes WSP Sells who will be looking primarily at the viaduct and structural issues. The Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) has joined us to address the public transportation portion of the project. The Public Archeology Lab will assist us by looking at any historical and cultural resource issues. GEI Consultants are responsible for geotechnical and ground condition issues. TetraTech is working on traffic, design, environmental permitting and hazardous waste management. FXM Associates will assist us with socioeconomic impacts, technical, environmental, air quality and noise mitigation; and, as Mike mentioned, Howard/Stein-Hudson is with us for public outreach.

The project boundaries are defined by the green area shown here on this slide. This area begins at the viaduct near the Boston University (BU) Bridge and Commonwealth Avenue, continues along Cambridge Street out to the pedestrian overpass on the turnpike and along the Charles River just beyond the bridge crossing where all the traffic now bleeds out into the intersection of Soldiers Field Road and Cambridge Street. I think most people are familiar with the interchange. It has rail connections, it has a viaduct and it has a lot of traffic that backs up to and from Cambridge. In terms of the current traffic volume context, we are in the midst of doing a detailed traffic study with the help of the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS). To give you an idea of the rough volumes that move through the area on a given day, it is somewhere in the range of 142,000 vehicles in both directions. On the turnpike to the west of the interchange traffic volumes are approximately 147,000. At the interchange itself, there are approximately 66,000 vehicles moving through towards Storrow Drive, Memorial Drive and into Cambridge. The point of this slide is that there are a lot of cars moving through this area.

As Mike previously mentioned, one of the key driving forces of this project is MassDOT's plan to implement AET throughout the entire Massachusetts Turnpike. By removing all of the toll booths and the reconfiguration of ramps that allows, a large amount of space will open up and become available for other things. Another major reason for the project is to improve the safety at the intersections along Cambridge Street for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. The viaduct that runs from the Allston interchange into Boston is suffering from neglect and is nearing the end of its useful life span. In terms of AET, all tolls will be collected electronically. This slide provides you with an image of an AET tolling gantry and those we'd implement here would be similar. There are several ties to enhancing MBTA rail service operating in the existing CSX rail yard with expansions of rail services at South Station, improvements to local connections along the Grand Junction line, and the accommodation of the proposed West Station in this area. Another major reason for the project is improvements to bicycle and pedestrian conditions. Walking and cycling in the Cambridge Street corridor is very difficult. This will be one of the key factors addressed in our preliminary designs.

In summary the toll plazas are disappearing, there are rail operation needs and an aging viaduct structure. There are potential transportation improvements including reconfiguring local connections for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. Additional improvements include redesigning Cambridge Street for traffic, bicycles and pedestrian enhancements, and aesthetics. There are opportunities to improve rail and local bus connections within the CSX rail yard area and finally, there is the replacement of the I-90

² At the time of this writing, the project website has been fully developed and is under review by MassDOT to ensure accessibility by individuals with visual or other impairments.

viaduct and ability to shift the structure to better accommodate the natural direction of the Massachusetts Turnpike.

In terms of the project development process we are currently in the data collection and existing conditions analysis portion of the process. We are beginning to develop conceptual alternatives. Once we have developed these alternatives, we will evaluate them based on functional, environmental, natural and social standpoints. It has been important to us to establish the taskforce early on in this process so that input from various stakeholders and the public can be part of our design process. After we have developed alternatives, there will be some refinement and preferred actions. There will be environmental documentation for both State and Federal levels as MEPA and NEPA documentation is required for this project. Following the environmental documentation, the plan will be to advance the conceptual design to a preliminary design and to build the project using design/build methods.

In relation to the preliminary timeline, we are in the conceptual development stage right now and this will continue into the second and third quarters of 2014. Starting and moving forward with the taskforce will continue from the second quarter to the fourth quarter of 2014. The environmental filing period will run from the last quarter of 2014 through 2015 and into the beginning of 2016. The development of the preliminary design will begin about halfway through the environmental filing process in 2015 and will continue through 2016 as the environmental process comes to an end. The following steps will be the design/build procurement period which is planned to wrap up in the third quarter of 2017. We would also look to select a design/build contractor in 2017. Chris will now walk you through some early conceptual development plans and some of the ideas we've come up with so far.

- C: Chris Calnan (CC): Thank you Ed. Good evening everyone, I'm Chris Calnan with TetraTech and I am the project manager for the consultant team on this project. What I would like to do is briefly walk you through some of the earlier developed concepts that we have established. As Mike mentioned, last fall Governor Patrick released some very initial concepts, two of those I will show you briefly. These prior concepts were some of the initial ideas of the project and were created based on the opportunity to realign the Turnpike because of AET and also to address the aging viaduct. Going forward there is going to be a lot more to this project as far as multimodal accommodations and other aspects to improve transportation. We have since then prepared three representative groupings of different interchange configurations. All of these concepts will be expanded over the planning process. We are looking at making Cambridge Street a complete street with improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists. We are in the works of kicking off an effort with the CTPS of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to look at the regional traffic operations. They will be putting together a regional traffic model and we will then be able to use that data to test our different alternative configurations with a more fine-grained local traffic analysis.

Here is an image of the first concept that was released last fall. Remember, these are just early thoughts. This concept realigns the Turnpike, provides for the expansion of the South Station rail area, addresses the needs of the viaduct and creates two connections to Cambridge Street from the highway system. Those two ramp connections are paired up in such a way that at one location you have the off-ramps and at the other location you have the on-ramps. Also shown in the light-orange area are provisions for connections for future roadway networks in the area. The second concept that was released last fall is very similar to the one that you just saw. The concept still has two connections to Cambridge Street however the primary difference is that they are paired such that one intersection handles all of the traffic for the westerly ramps and one intersection handles all of the traffic for the easterly ramps.

The three groupings that we have going forward are as follows. Group one is more of a suburban type of an interchange. This setup could simply be described as one intersection getting on and one intersection getting off the Turnpike. Shown in the bright-yellow is the potential for ramps, in the darker blue are the bridge structures and in the orange are the future connections to local roadway networks. We are looking at the area where the expansion of the tracks would be in order to make sure we can accommodate the track offsets and the expansion of the potential Western Station platform. Group two

is another suburban type interchange. The major difference here is that intersection connections to Cambridge Street and that each intersection has both on and off-ramp connections to the highway system. All the other features are similar in this context in terms of addressing the turnpike realignment, the viaduct, expansion of the South Station and rail improvements. Group three is more of an urban interchange. When I say urban interchange what I really mean is that it takes up less space. This option is compact, dense and really serves as a collector/distributor type of interchange. There are roads that parallel the Turnpike similar to frontage roads where one could take an exit and would be right next to the Turnpike. In this setup we have three connections to Cambridge Street. All three connections here have both on and off-ramp connections and also have provisions to connect to future roadway networks that are shown in the orange color.

I want to note that on all of these concepts the focus has really been what the ramp configurations are but certainly going forward there is going to be a lot more emphasis on pedestrian circulations, bicycle accommodations as well as bus and rail connections. Lately we have been looking at the bigger picture of reconfiguring the interchange on and off-ramps. With that I believe our formal presentation has concluded and we'll now open it up to questions.

- C: MOD: Before we get started with the questions I wanted to go through some of the notes that I had taken down from the previous meeting that we conducted on April 10th at the Jackson Mann School and discuss some key elements that have been brought to our attention since I started meeting with the public, elected officials, and municipalities. The reason I bring this up now is because I am sure that some of the concerns you are thinking of may be answered in my notes. We are aware that this is not just a highway project but a community project. There was a lot of concern about construction mitigation and how MassDOT would manage traffic once construction gets underway. If there one thing that came out of the public information meeting we conducted, it would be that this project is about the people. This is a neighborhood project and we recognized that this is an interchange in a residential neighborhood. We recognized that we need to keep that in the context of our designs, developments and concepts. This will be a key element to the taskforce group in order to address the neighborhood. We also heard about connections to the Longwood Medical Area, the Fenway District, off-road bicycle paths, noise barriers, mobility, public health and multimodal facilities. This really is a multimodal transportation project and we intend to develop the concepts and designs to be consistent with that idea.

As part of the overall project we need to be able to accommodate the future West Station commuter rail, the future expansion of DMU service on the Grand Junction Line and providing connections for all modes from the neighborhood to that new station. Secretary Davey has proposed and I believe it is in the capital plan that we need to advance the opportunities for the DMU services and provide better connection between Cambridge, Somerville and Boston. For those of you who are not familiar with a DMU it is a Diesel Multi Unit. It's a more cost effective, faster way of rail transportation. DMU's can run faster and more efficiently between stops than a conventional commuter rail train of locomotive and cars.

When you take into account the points I just mentioned it leads us in the direction of the urban interchange. We don't want a high speed facility coming in and off of the Mass Pike. We want people exiting the Mass Pike and approaching Cambridge Street knowing they are going into a neighborhood and community. Although the project is on the Boston side of the Charles River, Cambridge and its residents will certainly be impacted regarding the construction and the final configurations of the project. There were a number of residents from Cambridge at the initial public information meeting and they brought this to our attention. The Grand Junction is always going to remain and be retained as a rail facility. That is our intention. This is the main connection for the MBTA to move there rail equipment and locomotives from one side of the river to the other. We are discussing increased parking areas and additional parking. If there is the potential for a new station MassDOT has to take into consideration the need for parking. You can see there is a long list of things we need to take into consideration as we're developing the concepts and the preliminary designs for this project and we fully intend to do so. With that I will now allow any of you who have any questions to feel free to come up to the microphone and ask them.

Question & Answer Session

- Q:** CDS: Quick question if I may. I want to first thank my colleagues from the state for convening this very important meeting. In one of your earlier slides you talked about stakeholders and it said Boston but then you mentioned in your remarks the neighborhood residents from the Riverside and Cambridgeport neighborhoods. For me, it is important that I see that in writing. When I see stakeholders in Boston I want to see Cambridge too. Can you please amend your presentation to refer to the stakeholders as Boston and Cambridge? I really appreciated the representations of how it's going to change however I really can't visualize it. You talked a lot about Cambridge Street. Are you saying that after you reorganize the roadway it will all flow onto Cambridge Street? I am not getting a good sense of this. It is very hard for me to read your diagram and difficult to see the overlay.
- C:** NNC: Is there a particular diagram you would like to see?
- C:** CDS: It doesn't make much of a difference. I can't visualize where I would be coming off the pike from the Cambridge/Allston exit. In that description I don't know where I would end up, it's confusing to me.
- A:** MOD: I will attempt to answer the question as best I can. As a result of the significant reconstruction of the interchange, Cambridge Street would undergo a complete redesign and reconstruction. That reconstruction would extend from the intersection at Soldiers Field Road to Allston Village at Cambridge Street and Harvard Avenue.
- Q:** CDS: So if I'm on the Mass Pike I would be coming down more through more of Allston to get to Cambridge?
- A:** MOD: If you are coming off the Pike, rather than going with the free flow ramps that currently exist, you would be placed onto a surface street. I am sure you are all familiar with the overpass at Genzyme and the Double Tree Hotel where Cambridge Street goes over the ramps. Our intention at this location is to remove that overpass and bring it down to grade. Our goal would be to bring the interchange traffic right into a signalized intersection at Cambridge Street.
- Q:** CDS: Could you please go back to the stakeholder slide. It appears that the taskforce is working in 2014. I think it would be useful to have the taskforce operate throughout the project as opposed to getting their input at the outset and then saying "thank you, you're done." Particularly when you talk about mitigation, there has to be a way to incorporate the community and relay the information back so that we know how things are going all the way into 2017. It would be useful to have a Cambridge representative on the taskforce particularly when you begin construction.
- A:** MOD: The focus right now and because we are only in the concept stage is to develop concepts for the overall design. There will be significant involvement with neighborhoods and officials regarding the management of traffic. The key objective of the taskforce right now and throughout the spring and summer months of this year is to assist us in developing alternatives that we can then advance further into environmental documents by the end of this year. By doing so, the public can then review them, provide comments and give us feedback.
- Q:** CDS: So the taskforce will continue to be incorporated through this entire process?
- A:** MOD: It is going to be a collaborative effort and our responsibility to communicate information back to the public specifically regarding the impacts during all phases of construction. Certainly this first portion of the taskforce will be developing alternatives and moving towards the environmental documents.

From that point on, it's a matter of MassDOT communicating back to the neighborhoods and communities as to how the traffic and construction will be managed. It will be an ongoing process.

Q: CDS: Thank you Mike. My last question relates to the timeframe going into 2020. Once you're in the design and construction part of it, where will you exit during the construction period?

A: MOD: That is a fantastic question and I wish I had an answer for you. There are going to be a lot of complexities around any of the alternatives that we develop as to how we will manage all the current traffic while we are trying to reconstruct and rebuild the new interchange. It is a very difficult question and it would be premature on my part to answer it now.

C: CDS: Okay, thank you.

Q: Carol O'Hara (COH): My name is Carol O'Hara. I live in Cambridgeport adjacent to Memorial Drive about halfway between the BU Bridge and the River Street Bridge. The section between Cambridgeport to Riverside and because the river is there and carries sound, you can hear the Turnpike traffic better on our side of the river than the Boston side. I worked at BU for many years and at BU you cannot hear the Turnpike on Commonwealth Avenue. You can however hear it very clearly on the Cambridge side of the river. The three tower BU dormitory acts as a soundboard and magnifies the sound from the Turnpike across the river. For this reason I think our side of the river is going to be more effected by construction noise. I am shocked that you have a taskforce that has nobody from Cambridge. Is that correct? There is a taskforce that has been formed and there are no Cambridge residents or businesses on it?

A: MOD: There are no Cambridge residents on the taskforce.

Q: COH: Why is that?

A: MOD: When we began evaluating the concerns from the many officials we approached as to how representation was best met, the goal was identifying the locations and areas that were in the neighborhood and critically impacted by the traffic patterns. Relative to the noise issues, we have not taken this on quite yet. We will be trying to understand the baseline conditions so all of the future conditions are no worst and ideally are better than they currently are now.

Q: COH: It's the construction noise that I'm concerned about. Could I please use the laser pointer?

A: NCC: Yes.

Q: COH: This Allston neighborhood is nowhere near as densely populated as this neighborhood in Cambridge. The Cambridgeport and Riverside neighborhoods were affected enormously by the BU Bridge renovation and I will note that I believe this project was handled successfully from a traffic perspective but not from a noise perspective. Can you make a commitment to engage and include a Cambridge representative on the taskforce? If you can't, who is going to be able to keep tabs on the project for us? Maybe we need a sound barrier during construction. Why would you not think to include a member of Cambridge on the taskforce? I am extremely concerned about the noise.

A: MOD: I recognize that. What I can commit to you is the fact that we will take into account the potential for noise during construction and how we can mitigate the noise for the design, for the final configuration of the interchange and the improvements along Cambridge Street. We have very stringent requirements that will be placed among the contractor within the contract documents that require them to maintain noise levels between certain thresholds. Long before we get there the consideration of noise will be completely evaluated in all of the environmental documentation that we have to prepare before we have a permit for any of the alternatives.

Q: COH: Okay thank you, just one more point. Do you think that when the BU dorms were built that there was any consideration given to the fact that the echoed noise is magnified? I doubt it. I'm wondering

how the noise will be tested and who is going to be there to make sure that the noise is not too loud. Do you have a noise engineer?

- A: MOD: Yes, our design team has a noise engineer and MassDOT also has a number of noise engineers who will be evaluating all of the alternatives. As I said, we will be taking into account the different noise impacts and what those are going to be with each alternative. It is in the documentation that we need to verify to our environmental regulatory agencies that we have taken into account each of the alternatives relative to the noise.
- C: NNG: Hello, I would just like to say that I think a Cambridge representative should be included on the taskforce. Thank you.
- Q: Walter McDonald (WM): Hello, my name is Walter McDonald and I live in Cambridge. My concern is to the complexity of this project. Your graphics are already daunting in terms of trying to figure out what is going to be. I am curious to know if you will have ongoing communication to report on phases as they develop. Will you be working with DCR? Similar to DCR, will you have announcements for meetings, published documents and other references available? Do you have that planned?
- A: MOD: We certainly do.
- Q: WM: How do we become a part of that list who gets informed?
- A: MOD: Hopefully you gave us your name and contact information at the sign in table with Nate when you walked in. If so, you automatically go into the project stakeholder database and that way we will be able to update you on any upcoming community or public information meetings. In addition to that, we will also have a website for the project and all the information presented to the public will be published on the website and available for you to review.
- C: NCC: Just a note, this is why it is very important that everyone signs in. We will take the sign in sheets to the office tomorrow and get the database updated first thing.
- Q: WM: Will you also be publishing advertisements for these meetings in the paper?
- A: MOD: Yes. We will continue to do it as we normally would. Over the years we have increased our communication in various forms of social media. It typically used to be radio and newspapers. Now we have Facebook, Twitter and various forms of social media that I don't even know exist. Lucky for me, people like Nate and others in our office are aware of these different types of social media applications which allow us to make the best use of all the old modes and the new ones too.
- Q: Rajiv Manslani (RM): Hi, my name is Rajiv Manslani. I am a resident and home owner in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. I have been in Cambridge for 9 years and I also lived on the other side of the River Street Bridge for 12 years so I am very familiar with this neighborhood. I want to respond to one point Carol just mentioned regarding traffic patterns not affecting Cambridge. I want to point out that this interchange of the Mass Pike is the interchange that all Cambridge residents use to enter and exit the Mass Pike. While the construction project is entirely on the Boston side of the river, every Cambridge resident who takes the Mass Pike and wants to get home will use this exit and does use this exit today. Please keep this in mind, the traffic does affect us. I want you to consider three points and I know there are a lot of things to consider here. One is that I applaud you in considering a commuter rail stop in the Allston section of this project. Whether it can be done in time and in the budget for this project is obviously to be determined but please make sure that nothing in this project precludes the future development of a commuter rail stop in both directions. I would also encourage you to consider expanding local road connections more than you displayed on the concept maps. Again as a frequent traveler to the other side of the river, I often have to make the left turn onto Cambridge Street westbound and the right onto Harvard Street southbound. If you've ever tried to do this between 3:00PM and 8:00PM it is a disaster. I would also like to encourage you to look at extending Babcock

Street from the southern side of Allston to the Mass Pike as well as Pleasant Street also on the south side of the Mass Pike across the rail lines and Turnpike to connect to the streets on the northern side of Cambridge Street. This would ease a lot of the traffic on Harvard Street and in the Allston neighborhoods. I'd also like to ask you to consider that this is a once in a life time project in this location and to not forget Storrow Drive. I have not seen in any of your diagrams a direct connection between Storrow Drive and the Mass Pike. I would love to see that and I think a lot of residents would as well. A connection from Storrow Drive westbound onto the Mass Pike westbound or from the Mass Pike eastbound onto Storrow Drive in either direction is incredibly important to ease congestion. The intersection of Cambridge Street and Soldiers Field Road is a choke point. You have five or six lanes of highway converting into two lanes of local roads. A direct connection from Storrow Drive to the Turnpike would help to ease the congestion and turn that intersection at the Double Tree back into a local intersection for neighborhood traffic. I believe that there has been a suggestion as to how that connection might be made by a resident in Allston and I would like to hear your thoughts on those three subjects. The commuter rail stop, the local road expansion across the project area and a direct connection between Storrow Drive and the Massachusetts Turnpike.

A: MOD: Three very complex issues to address and I don't think I can do justice to them all with the information we have developed to date. I can however promise you that they are all issues that we need to contend with as an agency, a design team and with the taskforce. I can tell you that these are all issues that have been discussed internally and we recognize the need to look at them.

Q: RM: One last point. Can you clarify the scope of the project, the mandate and the budget? Does it include those types of alternatives such as connections to Storrow Drive and some of the local roads across the project area?

A: MOD: We have been looking at how we can create a connection when heading west or east onto Storrow Drive. There is a fair amount of coordination and a fair amount of things that need to be taken into account. Let me reassure you that we will address these items.

C: RM: Great, thank you.

C: Robert Latremouille (RL): Hi my name is Robert Latremouille. I've given my comments to your leader and I'd like to give you another copy. I brought one colored version and two black and whites.

C: MOD: I just read them this week, sir.

C: RL: I've been working on the urban ring since 1986. I have two years rail experience and I've been working on the Charles River since 2000. I am deeply concerned of the area in which I think right now could be used for transportation to this location which looks to me like Harvard Medical School. You could limit yourself in this area if you do not leave room for a Green Line connection and if you do not leave room for Green Line storage in addition to the South Station storage. If you do not do this you are stuck with Harvard's proposal décor and very expensive décor.³ The photos I've given you show you where you can connect to the Commonwealth Avenue line and where you can connect to Kenmore. You can connect to the buses now; you can connect to the Orange Line now. The legislature with its subsidies of the organization in place certainly does indicate that the Kenmore Crossing looks like one that is going to work. MassDOT has done a great job in this area. MassDOT has stood up to a lot of the people that were complaining about the Grand Junction. MassDOT stood up to the people who were insisting on environmentally destructive things under the BU Bridge. Unfortunately that looks like it is classified as H3332 along with the destruction of hundreds of trees. The MBTA study showed that it is possible to get lovely transportation over the Grand Junction Bridge. I think that this should not be done, I think it's destructive. If you would let us know when those other meetings are happening I think there are a number of us would attend. Thank you.

³ The compositor of these minutes is unsure as to the use of the term "décor" in this setting.

C: MOD: Thank you very much for your comments sir.

Q: Joe Porter (JP): My name is Joe Porter. I am wondering if you have plans to extend the shared-use path and associate bike, rail or DMU use underneath the Mass Pike.

A: MOD: It is one of the schemes that we need to analyze. There are a lot of different elements to the project and part of the taskforce team's responsibility will be to address these elements. The idea of making a connection over the Charles River was first brought to my attention several months ago when I started meeting with the Allston neighborhood. Not only making a connection from Storrow Drive to touch down on the other side of the Mass Pike but also across the Charles River. We are not exactly sure what it will look like but these are items that we are considering.

C: JP: Thank you. I would like to express my strong support for off-road, shared-use, pedestrian and cycle based tracks from the Charles River and under the Mass Pike.

C: MOD: Thank you.

Q: Steve Kaiser (SK): Hi my name is Steve Kaiser, I live on Hamilton Street in Cambridgeport and I have a list of items here but I'm only going to mention three or four right now. I think one thing that needs to be expanded beyond this map is the area of your traffic analysis. The intersection at Cambridge Street and Memorial Drive seems to be the bottle neck of most of the traffic coming off the Mass Pike. The traffic at this intersection backs up onto the Boston side of the river and up onto the Turnpike. You must look at all of these intersections. Your traffic study has to be bigger than your construction study.

C: MOD: Agreed.

C: SK: Last year you did a study where you looked at both the Western Avenue and River Street Bridges for replacement. The traffic consultant was Howard/Stein-Hudson. They have all the traffic numbers, all the signal timing and a full knowledge of the area. That can be added to what you are working on now. You should really look at all four intersections, the two on River Street and the two on Western Avenue. I know your work on the Longfellow Bridge and I want to touch on pedestrian timing and signaling. I am willing to trust you because of your previous success and I hope you can improve on the previous teams pedestrian timing and signaling. The previous team came up with a 13 seconds walk time for someone trying to get across the Boston end of the River Street Bridge. That was the maximum they could come up with, I think you can guys can do much better, more like 30 seconds. Please work on the commitment to a good pedestrian crossing in this area. I would also like to caution you on cycle tracks at the River Street Bridge. Once you come to an intersection it is extremely dangerous with pedestrians. I couldn't get the previous team to realize this. Cycle tracks should only be an option and I suggest you fully analysis them compared to a bicycle lane. One existing cycle track in Cambridge by MIT gets dropped before it reaches the intersection because the designers couldn't make it work. Please take a look at that. The last thing is the issue of the underpasses. It was estimated that it would cost half a million dollars just for the underpass at the River Street Bridge. If you don't do it now with this project you're ruined. Those are the four things that I think you should really look at

C: MOD: Thank you. We are always looking to improve on mistakes we've made in the past. I spoke with Renatta Von Tscharnier recently about the underpasses and it is something we are constantly looking at and trying to find ways to best handle this issue.

Q: Glen Berkowitz (GB): Hi I'm Glen Berkowitz with the Livable Streets Alliance in Cambridge. This interchanged was literally designed and built half a century ago. Over the last 50 years it's clear that back then, the construction was all about cars, trucks and very little else. We know Mike O'Dowd and most of his consulting team and we are hopeful and excited that MassDOT agrees that this project offers the potential to be about people and not just cars, trucks and other travel modes but neighborhood and communities as well. We encourage MassDOT to view this as a new holistic urban roadways project. A project grounded in the goals to enhance livability of existing and new neighborhoods, yet to be created

and founded in modern complete streets principles; principles that look broadly at implementing world-class solutions for motorist, transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians. With so much to gain it is critical that we reach out to every opportunity that Mike and his team have discussed today:

- The first would be new direct connections between I-90 and the Fenway, Longwood Medical area. Can this new I-90 Allston Interchange and nearby sections of I-90 be designed in ways that create or at least allow direct connections to the Longwood Medical and Fenway district?
- Two: new direct connections from I-90 to Soldiers Field road and Storrow Drive. If feasible, what effects would it have on Storrow Drive and Cambridge roadway operations? We see the potential pros and cons in this and we look forward to evaluating these with MassDOT.
- Can Cambridge street be designed and constructed not just between the Charles River and the portion shown here in yellow, but can it be reconstructed as a complete street all the way south into the neighborhood?
- Can we create a new off-road multiuse path called the People's Pike? It is something that I and other advocates have been talking about and we're starting to get a little concerned that MassDOT hasn't talked about or shown it in any of their design plans. This new off-road pedestrian multi use bicycle path in our mind would be separate from a complete street along Cambridge Street. As another person said before I got up, this People's Pike should be designed in a way that can complement and connect into a Grand Junction Path through Cambridge and beyond into Somerville.
- Can we design a new highway with sound mitigation and prevention? Not as something we think about as an after-thought but can we design it into the plans now as a part of the fundamental design itself? Not just for the Cambridge neighborhoods across the river but for the neighborhoods in Allston that have gone far too long without any sound protection from the Mass Pike.

Over the last few years, Livable Streets has been working with folks in Cambridge and Boston. We've learned that it is important for cities to stop ignoring what happens across borders. Cities need to work together to look holistically at transportation planning. Over the past couple of years Livable Streets had a Better Bridges campaign where we worked with MassDOT, Cambridge and Boston to bring both cities on either side of the river together on these design issues. We look forward to helping Boston and Cambridge with this issue and this exciting new Allston Interchange Project. To the Cambridge City Councilors and other Cambridge residents, please know that Livable Streets is willing to meet with each and every one of you to provide more information, more details, and the vision that I and other advocates see with this project. Thank you.

C: MOD: Thank you Glen.

C: Mark Jaquith (MJ): My name is Mark Jaquith and I live in East Cambridge. Glen just stole my speech and gave it much better than I could of so thank you. The one thing that I haven't heard mentioned and I think is an opportunity that is here now and will never be again is expanding the parkway and the bike path along the river that runs north and south. As it is now, it is one of the most narrow and dangerous portions of the entire path ways and it's been crying out for improve for years and years. There may be a little space to be added between the path and the Charles River. I just want to say it's an opportunity we'll never have again and something to be done with right now. I am a big fan of the Grand Junction multi-use path. It is starting to get going in Cambridge and Somerville. There is the possibility of funding and getting built and if you don't consider connecting up with that when you're doing this project it's another lost opportunity. Thanks.

C: MOD: Thank you sir.

Q: Marilyn Wellons (MW): Marilyn Wellons, I live in Cambridge. I'm wondering if you could help me out on the budget and the timeline. Is this part of the Boston MPO budget? Is this part of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)?

A: MOD: It will be part of the TIP, yes.

Q: MW: But it's not on the TIP yet?

A: MOD: No, it is planned to be part of the generally improvement plan but is not currently programed on the TIP.

C: MW: I'm sorry you went too fast for the human ear with which I am equipped.

A: MOD: We do have it accounted for in the Capital Improvement Plan. You are right; we will have to program it into the Boston MPO.

C: MW: Right and things move on and off the capital plan all the time so I don't remember that this was on it but surely it is? Or it will be?

A: MOD: If it's not it will be, yes.

C: MW: The TIP is a rolling three year budget plan and this goes way beyond fiscal 2018. It will just keep going until all things are done because as you were saying, the Cambridge Street Bridge would be finished in fiscal 2019.

A: MOD: In this project we are anticipating it to go this way; I don't want to say that it will because we have a lot of work ahead of us, but we would like to see construction start in 2017 and we anticipate a full three years of construction.

Q: MW: I'm sorry. Would it be fiscal year 2017 or calendar year 2017?

A: MOD: It would start in the calendar year 2017. It remains to be seen whether it would be fiscal year 2017 or fiscal year 2018.

C: MW: Okay, that helps.

C: MOD: Thank you.

Q: Heather Hoffman (HH): Hi my name is Heather Hoffman, I live in East Cambridge, I was at your other meeting and I really appreciate your summary of comments, I think you did a pretty good job. The one thing that I wanted to ask is about rail connections because as you may know, there was discussion about sending regular rail over the Grand Junction and there was much outcry in my neighborhood about that possibility. I hope that what you're thinking of it terms of the rail does not include that because we really don't want to fight that again.

A: MOD: The rail connection that we are looking to maintain and I'm not speaking on behalf of the MBTA because I work for MassDOT Highway Division but we are all one organization is to be able to maintain the equipment movement in order to allow the MBTA to operate its system on both sides of the bridge.

C: HH: I just wanted to be sure because you are talking about a new train station so I just wanted to be really sure that we are done with that.

A: MOD: Keep in mind that the DMU service that we are anticipating will be built in the next 10 years and hopeful we can get DMU service established at this location. In order to provide for this service, the Grand Junction rail would need to be established in order to provide for that service.

Q: HH: DMU is far different than a commuter rail?

- A: MOD: That's correct, it is. As I noted earlier, DMU's are lighter and smaller than conventional locomotive-hauled trains.
- C: HH: Thanks.
- Q: CH: I just had one more point based on somebody's comment and that is that the Turnpike very often puts sound barriers next to residential neighborhoods. Sometimes they are attractive if there in places like Weston and sometimes they're not. What I was thinking was that because of the dramatic increase in sound amplification that resulted after those dorms were built, I wonder if you would install a recording, sound measuring device on our side of the river? Maybe where the Morse School is? Or maybe in a couple of places that measure up high where the Turnpike amplifies from. The sound that trucks and aftermarket mufflers make is very loud. It is important to understand this just as you do traffic counting. It's not just construction noise, it is ongoing permanent noise.
- A: MOD: What we will do is as the design starts to progress towards the end of the summer is establish a baseline noise criteria and baseline noise condition. We will put out noise receptors at various locations throughout the impacted area and construction area and evaluate what the existing noise conditions are relative to the thresholds for certain uses. This is a very complicated formula that gets applied to how we evaluate the noise and it is part of the baseline noise condition that we will look to establish for this area.
- C: CH: How about aiming to improve it instead of aiming to keep it the same it because as I said earlier, nobody thought about that particular combination with BU. All of the aftermarket mufflers are rampant now.
- C: MOD: Often times when we set up the noise receptors at various locations we'll run them for 24 hours so we can get a full understanding as to what the noises are during certain periods of the day and in terms of certain days of the week. There is a significant amount of effort we need to put into this topic and we will hear a lot more as we move forward with the design alternatives. Thank you.
- C: SRJL: Hi, I'm State Representative Jay Livingstone. I represent two neighborhoods, Cambridgeport and Back Bay in Boston and both have the chance to be potentially impacted by this project. As I listen to the comments tonight and think about how this affects the neighborhoods it has become apparent that there are different points of view that are being brought to the table. All the comments that we have heard tonight are regarding the potential impacts to Cambridge in terms of sound, traffic and quality of life. These comments are going to be different from the residents in Allston. I agree with the request made by others that a Cambridge representative should be brought onto the taskforce panel. I'm not going to repeat a lot of the comments that I agree within terms sound, multimodal transportation and improvement of access. I do want to comment on a couple of items regarding improvement of access to Fenway and expand that to the Back Bay area. There is a separate MassDOT study going on with respect to improvement of access to the Mass Pike, Back Bay and Fenway right now. A part of the Mass Pike in this area is the "slingshot"⁴ which wasn't mentioned and it hasn't been effective for a variety of different reasons. Its effectiveness would improve with the electronic tolling. As you are looking at access to this part of Boston I encourage you to look at ways that you can combine these studies to see if we can have greater improvements along to Fenway, into the Back Bay and along the Esplanade.
- C: MOD: Thank you representative.
- C: SK: Steve Kaiser again, just three quick points. One thing that might be very useful for you almost immediately in your current presentations is to have a little bit of history to give some perspective to how this project was built in the first place and why it was built since it is being rearranged. The strange S bend in there, people wonder why anyone would ever design a roadway like this. It was a battle

⁴ The "slingshot" is a toll-controlled U-turn which allows westbound traffic on I-90 to reverse direction and return to the ramps exiting to the Back Bay, South Station or the Williams Tunnel and points east.

between Bill Callahan and the old Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and Bill Callahan was going to swing that road right out over the river so the Turnpike extension would have been right in the Charles River. The MDC at the time had gone through a number of scandals with the previous commissioner. The new MDC Commissioner said I'm going to restore the integrity of the agency and fight this. His name was Robert Murphy, the former Attorney General. He said "look, you can't take our land because if you try to take our land we have eminent domain powers too and we can take it back ourselves." That was it was going to be a battle of eminent domain takings back and forth and this stopped Bill Callahan in his tracks so he had to make that extra little sharp turn in there. It is a very interesting story and it may help to give an overall sense of the area.

Another tricky thing is you have to estimate the background growth of development in the area. There is a lot of Harvard land and speculation in this area. If MassDOT is going in and improving the roads it will improve the capacity right? You're going to be hit with some sort of very heavy load of additional traffic than existing. You might find that the road system at some point has bottlenecks that are controlling everything and you can't handle the traffic that is currently using the system and you've got to contact the developers and say you have to scale down the development. To make this an ideal planning element for all modes of transportation this is a good challenge and I would start very early with this because it's going to be harder the further you go. The last sense of this point is purely political which is for a lot of legislators that come in from Western Massachusetts, they come in over the Turnpike and they use this exit to get onto Storrow Drive and head downtown to the Statehouse. We have two legislators here tonight and they probably heard through their comrades that people complain about the traffic on the turnpike and getting through this area. You're dealing with a very sensitive topic through this viewpoint as well on top of dealing with the viewpoint of the neighbors and everybody else. I wanted to make sure that you are aware and I'm sure that you already know but just keep this in mind. Thank you.

C: MOD: Thank you. One other point I want to bring to your attention is that some of the areas of impacts with regards to traffic and new development as you just touched on. We have brought CTPS on board to assist us in developing a regional traffic model which will take into account various modes of transportation including transit services in the future. They'll take into account all of the roadways and adjacent intersections both on the Boston side and the Cambridge side but they'll also take into account the future development.

Q: MJ: Mark Jaquith again from East Cambridge. I wanted to follow up on a few things to what Steve was just saying. One element I wanted to address was the 2nd slide in the project area in green. How much will be freed up for development? Who owns what? How's it zoned? How will certain parts be disposed of? Is it going to be BRA? Will it be sold directly off by MassDOT? Could you just expand a bit on what will be happening in this area?

A: MOD: The green triangle represents the area that has been purchased and owned by Harvard University. We will be operating under permanent easements to conduct transportation infrastructure and maintain transportation infrastructure. As far as future development proposals, that will be undertaken by the property owner and the property owner is Harvard.

C: MJ: Thank you.

C: GB: Hi Mike, just in case you finish working through all the issues I mentioned before by early next week we want to make sure you have some more stuff to do. The gentleman before reminded me that along the Boston side of the Charles River, with this project can we create or at least facilitate the future creation of new urban park land along where Soldiers field road pushes hard up against the Charles River. Can we design a new interchange that moves all the various rail and highway and Storrow Drive south, so that we can create new open space and park land and wider and better bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along the Boston shore? In other words can we take this new interchange and shift in such a way to as to extend the Esplanade beyond the BU Bridge where it currently terminates? Second point, and I learned 20 years ago not to disagree with Steve Kaiser too much, but while we do agree

that there will be development on the land that is adjacent to both sides Cambridge Street, we don't agree that the new development will necessarily mean an additional dump of thousands of new cars and trucks each day. After all, if that is what happens, MassDOT's GreenDOT and sustainability goals will never be met. One of the things we love about your project so far is the logo you use in which you show a car, you show a bicycle and you show a transit vehicle. If we're all successful working together and this is a true multimodal transportation project, then we will be able to replicate, what Cambridge has proved to all of us and to Massachusetts in Kendall Square: that you can have significant development not have the old style of increased traffic. We look forward to seeing that happen here. Thank you.

C: MOD: Thank you.

Q: CM: My memory of the Harvard Institutional Master Plan (IMP) that BRA approved doesn't include this?

A: MOD: That is correct.

Q: CM: So what are they doing?

A: MOD: There are no immediate plans for the development of this parcel. Harvard will be working with us to create and establish a workable interchange that accommodates all modes of transportation. As far as future development, potentials and proposals that's something that Harvard would once again have to bring back to the BRA and establish or deny anything. The IMP that was filed last year and that was approved by the BRA was primarily focused on the north side of Cambridge Street next to Western Avenue.

Q: CM: I'm wondering from your point of view what is the tail, and what's the dog?

A: MOD: MassDOT's role in this is to establish a new interchange that accommodates all users and modes while working with Harvard at the property owner.

C: CM: Thank you.

Q: RM: One last quick question, you said that construction is estimated to start in the calendar year 2017. Can you clarify what the old CSX rail yard cars are going to be doing between now and that time?

A: MOD: MassDOT is always trying to expand commuter rail service to and from Worcester and to and from South Station. There is an anticipation that as a result of trying to maintain that commuter rail service that we may have to start storing some of our equipment on the yard tracks. You may in the near future start to seeing some MBTA rolling stock to accommodate the increased service between Boston and Worcester.

Q: RM: Thank you and one last quick question. The aging viaduct, what is the eastern edge end? Is that where the Mass Pike transitions under Commonwealth Avenue?

A: MOD: It's just before the BU Bridge.

C: RM: Thank you.

A: MOD: I should say the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge but I think you knew what I was talking about.

C: MOD: Good evening Senator, would you like to say a few words?

C: Name not given [NNG]: I'm good thank you.

C: MOD: I'd like to thank all of you for coming out this evening, I appreciate all of your comments and I look forward to seeing you in the near future. Thank you.

Next Steps

At present the taskforce team has been established and held its initial meeting. A City of Cambridge representative has been added to that body based in part on the requests received at the meeting summarized in this document. It is currently anticipated that the next public information meeting will take place in late June or early July of 2014.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Jason	Alves	City of Cambridge
John	Audro	City of Cambridge
Glen	Berkowitz	Livable Streets
Nathaniel	Curtis	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Bill	Deigan	City of Cambridge
Tom	Dionesotes	City of Cambridge
Nick	Gross	HSH
Jean	Hartnett	Cambridge Resident
Heather	Hoffman	Cambridge Resident
Mark	Jaquitia	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Steve	Kaiser	Cambridge Resident
Brendan	Kearney	Walk Boston
Robert	LaTremouille	Cambridge Resident
Jay	Livingstone	City of Cambridge
Rajiv	Marslani	Cambridge Resident
Walter	McDonald	Cambridge Resident
Peter	Missouri	City of Cambridge
Brian	Murphy	Cambridge Development Department
Carol	O'Hare	Cambridge Resident
Joseph	Poirier	Cambridge Resident
Ed	Simmons	City of Cambridge
Bob	Sloan	Walk Boston
Marilyn	Wellons	Cambridge Resident