



May 15, 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
1st Taskforce Meeting
Meeting Notes of May 7, 2014**

Overview

On May 7, 2014 the Allston Interchange Improvement Project taskforce held its initial meeting. The taskforce is composed of local residents, business owners, transportation and green space advocates as well as representatives of local, state and federal governments. The purpose of the taskforce is, through the application of members' in-depth local knowledge, to assist and advise MassDOT in developing an implementable design for the reconstruction of the I-90 Allston Interchange, the Allston viaduct and Cambridge Street in the vicinity of the interchange. The chance to reconfigure the interchange has emerged through the opportunities presented by the implementation of All Electric Tolling (AET) and the structural deficiency of the I-90 Allston viaduct. The agency sees the project as not only an opportunity to improve safety on the Turnpike by straightening it and addressing a structurally deficient bridge, but also to improve safety and connections for all modes of travel in the area around the interchange, particularly along Cambridge Street which has been noted by local residents as dangerous and acting as a barrier between Allston and the Charles River. Another major goal of the Allston Interchange project is to provide the commuter rail conditions necessary for the expansion of South Station and the eventual creation of West Station in the old Beacon Park yard as well as the inauguration Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) service along the Grand Junction line from Allston into Cambridge and Somerville.

The purpose of the meeting summarized herein was to introduce the taskforce members to each other and to ensure that all of them would begin their work with the same basic knowledge of the interchange and its environs already researched by the MassDOT project team and presented to the community in public information meetings on April 10th and May 1st. The meeting also provided both MassDOT and taskforce members with an opportunity to share their priorities for the project. Agency priorities are listed in detail in the section of these minutes addressing the presentation given at the start of the session as are those of taskforce members, however, some widely-shared priorities emerged including the following:

- Improving safety for all modes of travel, particularly at those points where entrance and exit ramps for the Turnpike connect to local roadways;
- Ensuring that traffic continues to flow and that its impact on abutting residential areas is ideally lessened, and under no circumstances made worse;
- Improving multimodal connections in the area around the interchange;
- Reknitting Allston to itself as the interchange acts as barrier between portions of the neighborhood;
- Tightening multimodal connections between North Allston, Allston Village and the Charles River; and,
- Creating conditions which foster local business.

The tone of this meeting was broadly positive with many taskforce members voicing optimism about the project and MassDOT's approach to it. A major theme of the discussion portion of the meeting was the idea of new connections, both east-to-west in the project area, and north-to-south across the Turnpike and

commuter rail lines between Cambridge Street and the area along Commonwealth Avenue in Boston University. Taskforce members also wanted to know more about potential options for the interchange redesign that the consultant team had already looked at and dismissed and the reasons why these options were not being pursued. This will be discussed further at the second taskforce meeting which will address the options not being pursued as well as the constraints associated with the project. It is worth noting that of the three options shared with the taskforce, members seemed to prefer the “urban interchange.”

Detailed Meeting Minutes¹

C: Michael O’Dowd (MOD): Ladies and gentleman my name is Michael O’Dowd. I am with MassDOT and I am here to present this particular project to the task force tonight. We are all going to work together to achieve a successful outcome on this project and I am looking forward to it. Let me first address what the project is. It is the Allston Interchange Improvement Project. Many of you are very familiar with the project, perhaps even more familiar with it than I am. I’ve had the opportunity to work with many of you in the past on other high priority projects and this one is certainly at the top in comparison. The administration has expressed its concern of bringing this project forward but not bringing it forward without full collaborative effort of this team. The success is going to be measured in large by our ability to come to an agreement on a preferred alternative at the end of this process. I have no doubt that we will reach that point and I think that we will all agree that not all of us will walk away having achieved everything we wanted including MassDOT, but we will achieve what everybody finds to be a reasonable consensus on a preferred alternative that we can advance into environmental documents and ultimately into design.

I’m going to introduce the members of the team that will be working with us for the next several months. Our facilitator of the task force is Ed Ionata. Ed brings years of valuable experience in conducting task forces, advisory committees and advisory groups. Similar to this, our community interest was paramount and a significant concern with state agencies and their priority projects. In addition to Ed, we also have Chris Calnan. Chris Calnan will be the project manager and the team leader from TetraTech. TetraTech also has Mike Hall who is in the back left. Mike will be the lead traffic engineer on the project. Bryan is in the back sitting next to Mark Gravalles, one of the members of our team at MassDOT and next to him is George Bachelor with MassDOT’s landscape architecture unit. Many of you have probably worked with these gentlemen before and have good working relationships with them because they are very easy to get along with, unlike myself. In addition to working with Ed, I cannot overlook Howard/Stein-Hudson’s representation. Howard/Stein-Hudson is serving as our public outreach and coordination specialist. We have Nate Curtis in the back who many of you have met when you signed in this evening and working with him is Nick Gross. Nick is up front taking the minutes for tonight’s meeting.

We are all aware of the fact that last fall the Governor made an announcement and identified this particular project as a key priority for his administration and for transportation in this region. When I heard that I asked Mark Gravalles, one of the project managers in this particular neighborhood on the Cambridge Street Overpass in Allston village if I could attend one of his public meetings. I wanted to get out and meet all of you who attended that meeting, introduce myself and have you introduce yourselves to me. I’ve had the opportunity to meet and speak with many of you, enough so that I have a flavor as to what I feel some of the concerns and priorities are for each of you. At this time the need of the task force and the request for the task force was loud and clear. All of you bring a unique concern and a unique goal that we want to see as part of this project and a successful outcome of this project. They may not all be shared by each and every one of you and some of you may have a different aspect or a different concern that you want to address than the preferred alternative. I ask that each and every one of you respect the time, wishes and desires of your counterparts sitting next to you at this table right

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

now. This is going to be a team effort, a collaborative effort and it's going to be important that we all listen to each other in order to have an understanding of where we see the project moving.

MassDOT convened this task force and it wasn't without the feedback and input from many agencies and elected officials. That is how you are all here tonight. It wasn't any chance or fluke. Each and every one of you were specifically identified and represent a specific organization, community, neighborhood, business or association. I thank all of you for accepting the invitation to participate and I do recognize that this will take up a fair amount of your time during the summer but I think we can all agree that doing something, building a new multi-modal interchange is critical to the community, the neighborhood and certainly for MassDOT as a transportation facility. I want to thank you again for joining us. Now that you've met me, you've met some of the people at MassDOT, you've met the design team that is going to be working on bringing you all the information you need, I'm going to ask that each and every one of you introduce yourselves to the rest of us. When you do, please state your name because there are a few of you that I don't know and I also ask that you identify the group that you represent and what you see as a key priority or concern for the final objective. How would you define the success of this task force? This way we have an understanding as we advance further into what it's going to take to reach that agreement and consensus. With that said, Tom, please start off.

- C: Tom Yardley (TY): My name is Tom Yardley. I'm a transportation planner with MASCO which is an organization in the Longwood Medical area. We are made up of 24 member institutions. I'm here tonight primarily to listen and I would say if we have any particular general goals it is to improve our regional multimodal access from all destinations. Thank you.
- C: Will Luzier (WL): My name is Will Luzier. I've lived in Allston for about 14 years and I'm interested in making sure the neighborhood is preserved.
- C: Jillian Zywiec (JZ): My name is Jillian Zywiec. I work for the Massachusetts Motor Transportation Association and Mass Movers Association. We represent truckers and movers. I'm here primarily to ensure that interchange is built so as to serve commercial vehicles well.
- C: Jessica Robertson (JR): I'm Jessica Robertson, I live in Allston. My day job is with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council but I will be wearing my residential hat in this forum. Out of the many amazing things that can come out of this project one of the things that I am hoping to get out of it is more permeability between North Allston, Allston Village, the BU campus and the Charles River.
- C: Nick Clemons (NC): I am Nick Clemons representing Congressman Kennedy's office. I am primarily here to listen but also to look at the opportunities and challenges within the project.
- C: Harry Mattison (HM): My name is Harry Mattison and I'm representing the Charles River Conservancy. As far as goals and outcomes from this process, I'd like to see improved transportation no matter which way you're traveling that improves the quality of life for people who live in the area as well as for people who travel through the area. It will create opportunities for economic development and also benefits the environment.
- C: Alana Olsen (AO): Hi everyone, I'm Alana Olsen and I run Allston Village Main Streets. One of our top priorities is improving connectivity between North Allston and Allston Village in order to promote the growth and success of our small business community.
- C: Kevin Wright (KW): Hi, I'm Kevin Wright. I'm with the Federal Highway Administration. I'm mainly here just to listen as well. As someone who drives the interchange everyday I'm really excited to see the congestion reduced.
- C: Wendy Landman (WL): Hi I'm Wendy Landman. I am the executive director of Walk Boston and what we're looking for is that the transportation improvements and the relating infrastructure that goes with those improvements creates a framework that in the future solves multimodal issues as far as bicycles,

walking and transit. It is also important to make the key connections from North Allston to Allston Village, Allston to the Charles River and BU to Harvard.

- C: Wayne Mackenzie (WM): Hi my name is Wayne Mackenzie. I'm a lifelong resident of Allston. I'd like to make sure that the Turnpike impacts and the projects impacts in regards to the people who live in the neighborhood are considered. I'd like to see better access to the Charles River and to the Turnpike as well.
- C: Rochelle Dunne (RD): My name is Rochelle Dunne. I'm a resident of Pratt Street and this project is in my backyard. I've lived in the neighborhood for seven years and my family has lived in my same house for four generations.
- C: Craig Cashman (CC): My name is Craig Cashman. I'm with the office of State Representative Michael Moran. I'm primarily here to listen however one of our goals is to make sure the community wide goals are heard throughout the process.
- C: Tad Read (TR): I'm Tad Read with the Boston Development Authority and I'm here with our partners from the Boston Transportation Department. We'll be listening tonight. We also see this as an opportunity to not only modernize the Massachusetts Turnpike but also to create sustainable community in Boston.
- C: Joe Beggan (JB): Joe Beggan, Harvard University. I am interested in the final design reflecting a Complete Streets approach. I know people have been working hard on these concepts over the past few years and I want to make sure that this is a multimodal project and not just a highway project.
- C: Vineet Gupta (VG): I'm Vineet Gupta. I am the director of planning at the Boston Transportation Department. Either I or Jim Gillooly will be attending these meetings. From our perspective we want to make sure that whatever is designed fits well with the local street networks of Allston and Brighton as well as establishing good regional connections that use the interchange so that traffic flows. We also want to make sure that the outcome is focused towards walking and bicycling.
- C: David Loutzenheiser (DL): Hi I'm David Loutzenheiser. I'm with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. MAPC is the regional planning agency for metropolitan Boston and we cover 101 communities. I'm interested in reconnecting some of the neighborhoods that the Turnpike currently severs as well as provide access for all users.
- C: Glen Berkowitz (GB): I'm Glen Berkowitz with the Livable Streets Alliance. I still remember the day 32 years ago when I drove six hours down from Maine to look at Colleges in Cambridge. I happened to get off at this exit and it was a day that the Red Sox were playing. It really made me question whether this was a place that was as smart as I thought it was. I'm with Livable Streets and I'll save more of my specific comments for later on in the meeting.
- C: Galen Mook (GM): My name is Galen Mook. I am an Allston resident and also part of the bicycling community. I will be representing myself as a resident at the task force table. I will be thinking about bicycling connectivity, better flow along the Turnpike and further onto the local streets. I live on Royal Street and I want to make sure that the neighborhood around here including Pratt Street doesn't get inundated with Turnpike traffic. I will be pushing for not just Complete Streets but bicycle infrastructure that is more modern than what we familiar with and more 21st century than what we already have.
- C: Jim Curley (JM): My name is Jim Curley. I'm in the office of Representative Kevin Honan. I am mostly here to gather information. I believe that improving the Allston community while improving transportation is the most important aspect to this project.
- C: Bill Deignan (BD): I'm Bill Deignan from the City of Cambridge Community Development Department. I guess our primary interest is going to be looking at the alternatives and seeing how they relate to the

network of paths and roadways in the Charles River basin so we can improve connectivity to the Turnpike as well as to Cambridge Street and back to Cambridge

- C: John Laadt (JT): Hi I'm John Laadt representing the Mayor's Office. I am primarily here to listen and to communicate the communities concerns back to Mayor Walsh.
- C: Anabela Gomes (AG): Hi I'm Anabela Gomes. I'm the president of the Brighton/Allston Community Association and I'm here to make sure that the community is successfully represented.
- C: Grant Nickerson (GN): Grant Nickerson from the Allston Board of Trade. Main concern is that there is workable and efficient access to the business district, likewise to the local neighborhoods. I would also like to see the link between North Allston and Allston Village repaired.
- C: Elizabeth Leary (EL): Elizabeth Leary from Boston University. I am primarily here to listen and also understand the impacts and opportunities for BU, specifically our west campus which is a major residential piece of Boston University.
- C: Steve Silveira (SS): Steve Silveira representing Boston University. I share Elizabeth's thought and I am primarily here just to listen.
- C: Paul Berkeley (PB): My name is Paul Berkeley. I am a lifelong resident of Allston and president of the Allston Civic Association. My interest is focused in the quality of life in Allston. I rode on the Massachusetts Turnpike the first night it was opened. I did some quick calculations and about 20 billion cars have passed through our neighborhood since it was opened. We've been waiting 49 years for this meeting
- C: Paola Ferrer (PF): My name is Paola Ferrer and in my day job I am the development director for the Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center. Although the roster that has been distributed today indicates my affiliation with the organization my role here is as a home owner and resident of the community. I live on Royal Street. My priority and final objective for the task force is that I hope to echo what others have said regarding neighborhood connectivity. It is really important to bring the Allston Village and North Allston back together like Humpty-Dumpty. We need improved infrastructure for non-motorized users of the roads. As a bicyclist and pedestrian I get really scared having to cross the mouth of the egress of vehicles from the Turnpike. It is really nerve racking. Of course I would love to see better connections to the Charles River which is one of our biggest assets and resources. Though we are the closest neighborhood to the Charles River we are probably the most distant from it.
- C: Matthew Danish (MD): My name is Matthew Danish. I'm a nearby resident in Allston and also a member of the Allston Civic Association. My interest is in creating a better neighborhood, reknitting the neighborhood, ensuring connectivity in all directions, especially for walking, biking and public transportation.
- C: Mary Maguire (MM): I'm Mary Maguire, director of public and legislative affairs at AAA Southern New England. My daughter is a senior at Boston University and lives in Allston. My sister has lived in Brighton for more than 40 years and I would say that AAA's top priority would be safety for motorist, cyclist and pedestrians.
- A: MOD: Thank you Mary. You've all met Ed and you all know who I am now. When we sent out these invitations we asked that each and every one of you... Yes, Galen.
- C: GM: I think there are actually some members who didn't get a seat at the table who are a part of the task force.
- C: Mark Handley (MH): Thanks Galen. I'm Mark Handley. I work with Councilor Mark Ciommo. I'm really happy to be here tonight and see all of you folks.

- C: MOD: Joe, I forgot you too, sorry about that.
- C: Joe Orfant (JO): Not a problem. I'm Joe Orfant. I'm the chief of bureau planning at DCR. We at DCR have a keen interest in how this project will affect Soldiers Field Road and we are interested in the opportunities to improve links to the Charles River parklands and connections to the community.
- C: Nicole Freedman (NF): I'm Nicole Freedman. I'm with the City of Boston Bike program. It's probably not hard to figure out what my interest is. Most importantly, I want to make sure that what is developed here represents and encourages walkability and cyclability.
- C: Bruce Houghton (BH): I'm Bruce Houghton. I'm the president of Houghton Chemical Corporation. Along with the hotel, we are one of the only remaining businesses in this whole area. I'm the second generation that's been on that particular property and my primary interest is to make sure that our access remains efficient. In the last year my daughter has come to work and will be the fourth generation of Houghton Chemical and third generation on that property. She'll be the first to run a female-run Houghton Chemical.
- C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): That's very nice, a round of applause for that please.
- C: BH: She would very much appreciate it.
- C: Andrew Bettinelli (AB): I'm Andrew Bettinelli. I'm a Brighton resident and I will be representing State Senator Will Brownsberger. I'm here to listen mostly, participate when I can and I would like to express the optimism I have for the tempo of this project and more importantly, working with all of you.
- C: John Cusack (JS): John Cusack. I'm a lifelong Allston/Brighton resident. My chief concern is safety as you get closer to the Charles River. The biggest thing for me and I don't think anyone has touched on it yet is that I would like to see the Cambridge Street Bridge as a two directional bridge. Thank you.
- C: MOD: I apologize to the task force members who did not get a seat at the table. Next time we will have more seats set up around the table. Donny, please introduce yourself to the group.
- C: Donny Dailey (DD): I'm Donny Dailey, MassDOT Legislative Affairs.
- C: MOD: If you don't get an answer from me, trust me, you'll get an answer from Donny. For anyone in the general public, obviously the public is always welcome and encouraged to attend these. We do have a fair amount of business to go through in a short period of time so I will ask that you hold your comments until the end. If we do have time available at the end of the meeting I would be more than happy to allow you to speak then. In the future if you have any comments or any feedback that you wish to submit to us, we are more than happy to accept them. You can submit your comments through Nate and Ed Ionata. This way we can be sure to address it as we move along. A couple more people who are attached to the design team are our structural engineers in the back of the room. With us from WSP Sells are John Wicks and Rich Lenox. I also feel that it is necessary to introduce one of our own at MassDOT, Stacey Donahoe. I asked you to all make room this summer and spring for at least 10 evenings because I initially thought it would take 10. When I start listening to what your goals and objectives are and that fact that they are pretty much meshed with our goals and objectives, I think we can get it done in a much sooner time frame than that. With that I'm now going to ask Ed Ionata to step up and go through the task force administration and ground rules.
- C: Ed Ionata (EI): Thanks Mike. I'd like to give a quick recap on the project team and there may be some questions about what all the various disciplines are and who's taking care of them. We have MassDOT at the top in coordination with Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA). We have the Public Archeology Lab for historical and cultural resource issues. As Mike previously mentioned, we have WSP

working on structural elements such as the viaduct and highway structure. Working on the socioeconomic and economic analysis we have FXM Associates. We have Tech Environmental working on the air and noise analysis. Reviewing the traffic roadway and environmental issues we have TetraTech. Chris Calnan will also be leading the general highway design efforts. Working on geotechnical and surface issues we have GEI Consultants. Last but not least, we have Howard/Stein-Hudson, both Nick and Nate will be working on the public outreach portion of the project. You all should have a copy of the task force membership and thank you again for all of your introductions.

C: PB: We only got page three.

A: El: That's all that is there, it's just the third slide.

C: PB: Ok, thank you.

C: El: Thank you for all of your introductory comments and your priority issues. We would like to end this meeting later with perhaps a little bit more of a detail listing after you see some of our preliminary concepts. We would like to create a more detailed listing of what your concerns might be. The goal of the task force is to guide the design effort and to guide the search for an alternative that meets as many needs as possible. Part of my job is to make sure that you are listened to at these meeting, to make sure that you get the information you are looking for at future meetings and to make sure that the designers who work for me, understand the information that is coming in and understand that information as we move forward with future designs. There are certainly a lot of issues to deal with and that is my job.

The purpose of the task force that has been convened by MassDOT is to get to an agreement on an implementable alternative that meets the goals for this project and focuses in on a preferred alternative that would later move forward into the environmental process, final design and construction. This portion of the slide show is a little bit of a recap for those of you who may have attended either of the two previous public information meetings. Some of you have been there some have not and I apologize for the ones who have because this may be a little bit repetitive. We thought it would be very important to bring all the task force members up to the same relative level of knowledge before we continue to discuss. The general project development process is data collection, analysis of existing conditions and development of conceptual alternatives. That right now is where we sit.

Glen Berkowitz sent me a good list of questions this week about details of conceptual designs. I am happy to say that you will see some conceptual designs in a few minutes presented by Chris Calnan and I'm also happy to say that this is currently where we sit with our conceptual designs. We haven't worked out a lot of details and it's very important to hear all of the preferred variations from this group before we go grinding in the details. We have three conceptual ideas as to how to solve the interchange issues and you will see those in a minute. Right now we are sitting at a very conceptual level with very open minds as to how to proceed. We will evaluate the alternatives with you and hope to look to you to turn your priorities into selection criteria and evaluation criteria. Refine preferred actions and once a preferred alternative is agreed upon, we will refine those preferred alternatives into what would be more of an engineering approach and closer to an actual construction design. We'll go through the environmental documentation, complete the preliminary design and then the plan will be to implement this project using a design/build method where a conceptual design will be handed to a team who will complete the design and then build it. Please stop me at any point if you have a question or a comment.

Q: PB: Is there an urban designer on the consultant team? For example, someone may need to consider future Air rights developments.

A: El: We do not have a specific firm however inside the various companies we do have urban designers and as we progress, they will be incorporated. If there is an urban design need identified and we need some help, I think we could bring someone on. It is a fluid team picked by a variety of folks at MassDOT. You bring up a good point.

C: PB: Thank you.

C: El: I will now move onto the preliminary project timeline. We are in the conceptual stage now. It is the middle of 2014 and our goal is to work through the task force group and come to finding of a preferred alternative by the end of the calendar year. We will be working through the environmental filings through 2015 and part of 2016. This will overlap with the preliminary design work with the completion of the environmental filing process extending through the end of it. It's always great to have the preliminary design working in conjunction with the environmental process so that additional issues that come up with the environmental process can be addressed in the preliminary design. We will have the procurement process in late 2016 through the first half of 2017 in order to select the design/build entity and construction with a completion by the end of 2020. In terms of the task force administration and ground rules, I don't want to have a real detailed discussion of that tonight. They are pretty straight forward and I would love to get comments. You all should have my email address for your comments and concerns about those. The best way to handle that is to send those to either myself or to Nate and we will respond to them via email.

Regarding the project area and scope, the basic project area is the area you see in green bounded roughly by Cambridge Street, the end of the viaduct, Cambridge Street at pedestrian bridge, the River Street and Cambridge Street intersection and the existing Turnpike highway. That's the area the designers have been tasked to look within. I'm going to back up for a few slides to the project area and meeting dates. A couple of preliminary date's spelled out in the invitation email you all received. A little bit of feedback at looking at different nights of the week. We can discuss that at the end of the presentation part of this if you would like. In terms of communication in between meetings, I'm wide open to communication as is Nate. In terms of phone calls and emails, we'll try our best to get back to you as soon as possible with any concerns you may have and push any suggestions you may have to the correct party within MassDOT.

Q: NNG: Where do we find your email? It's not in here.

A: NCC: It's displayed on the last line of the email we sent to you.

A: El: Both Nate's email and my email were in the invitation email to tonight's meeting.

C: PF: It is not. I do not have it.²

A: El: We will get you our contact information if you do not have it before you leave tonight.

Q: MOD: Did you all receive a letter requesting that you all come here this evening? It was mailed out on Monday.

A: PB: I didn't because my address was not correct.

C: MOD: Maybe this is one of the first things we should address in order to make sure that everyone has the correct contact information and to make sure we have the correct contact information for you. There was a letter that was sent out on behalf of MassDOT from Ed and Nate. Ed's contact information is at the bottom and Nate's is on the following page.

Q: PB: Did anyone receive the letter?

Q: MD: You mean email, correct?

² After this exchange, Nathaniel Curtis went over to Ms. Ferrer and pointed out where in the email the information was located.

- A: MOD: Yes I apologize. It was an email with the task force ground rules. Along with that memo is Ed Lonata's contact information, his email and his telephone number as well as Nate's.
- C: El: If for some reason you don't have it, I'm happy to give anyone a business card as you are leaving tonight. One last administration item as Mike had previously mentioned, we will be having detailed meeting minutes and all the presentation materials will be available to the task force members. We are working out the final kinks in the website which will be home to this material and as we move forward, you will be able to see design drawings on the website. In the meantime if anyone is urgent and wants to get the slideshow immediately please let me know and I will email you a PDF tomorrow morning as soon as I get back to the office.
- Q: HM: Could you go back to the project area slide? It is my understanding that this is where MassDOT sees the actual construction of the project occurring?
- A: El: That is correct.
- C: HM: I think from a lot of the comments that were made earlier, the idea of the impact area or the areas to consider whether that's Windom Street, North Harvard Street, Harvard Avenue, Brighton Avenue, Pratt Street, Western Avenue...
- A: El: Extends well beyond there.
- C: HM: Exactly, so we don't expect you to rebuild Brighton Avenue but...
- C: El: But you do expect us to know what is going on with the traffic for all the alternatives, connections to other projects and other streets well outside this area.
- Q: HM: Right. In the near future we can discuss how there is a construction area and how there is also a project area or an impact study area that is much broader?
- A: El: That would be extremely valuable from the standpoint of traffic analysis, noise analysis and where the sensitive receptors should be placed. We heard from some folks in Cambridge that the noise is actually louder on their side of the Charles River and they requested to be included in the noise analysis. That's exactly the type of criteria input we are looking for from this group. The general reasons for the project are to improve interchange safety, address the deficiencies of the I-90 viaduct which is reaching the end of its useful life span and to incorporate All Electronic Tolling (AET). One of the reasons that this project is going forward at this point is that the toll booths and all the ramp work feeding the tolls can be removed in the near future when AET comes to the Turnpike. More reasons for the project include enhancements to the MBTA rail service and as many folks have said, to improve pedestrian and bicycle conditions.

As for a bit more detail in terms of the project area and reasons for the project in terms of interchange safety. It should be obvious that if you remove all of the toll plazas, all of the toll plaza crashes that feed traffic through the toll plaza are eliminated. There are high crash locations that exist along Cambridge Street at the River Street and Cambridge Street crossing and at North Harvard that will certainly be addressed. In terms of the viaduct and I don't think anyone goes over it slowly enough to notice but it is reaching its end of the useful life. There are deficiencies in the structure and the need to replace the viaduct is another reason why we are looking at improving the interchange.

Here is an example of what AET looks like. These gantries will be out on the mainline and no stopping will be required anywhere along the entire Massachusetts Turnpike once AET is implemented from end to end. AET creates opportunities here and at all of the other toll plaza interchanges by reducing the unnecessary ramp work that feeds cars through onto and off the Turnpike. The MBTA is looking to make major rail service improvements in the rail yard portion which is now in the curve of the toll plaza area. There are plans for expansion for multiple track services, to improve local connections to the system, to

accommodate a potential West Station for MBTA service and to support Boston/Cambridge rail opportunities via the Grand Junction. Working with and around the rail service with the interchange is an important part of the project. Regarding pedestrian and bicycle conditions, I don't think we have to talk too much to this group to know that they are not optimum in terms of routing, pathways and certainly in terms of overall existing infrastructure.

As a quick summary the reasons for this project are traffic and safety, incorporating AET, looking at rail needs and improvements and taking care of the aging viaduct while taking into consideration all of the concerns that were voiced around the table. I want to give you a quick idea in the rounding of the traffic numbers. It is about a 150,000 car-a-day interchange coming down the mainline of the Turnpike and heading in and out of Boston. This is a two-way volume with 66,000 of those volumes moving through the interchange towards Cambridge and 38,000 along Cambridge Street. This is all just a long way of saying that there are a lot of cars that move through here. We have developed some early concepts which were presented at the initial public information meetings and Chris Calnan is going to come up and introduce the basic families of concepts that we've worked on so far.

- C: Chris Calnan: Good evening everyone. I appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight and the opportunity to work with the task force over the next 10 or so meetings. I can tell you that since we've come on board and for the past few months we are definitely in the infancy of this. We are looking forward to hearing a lot of your ideas that will come out of the task force and that will help shape the interchange and how we're going to move forward. With that I wanted to ask, how many folks did attend the Allston public meeting? Looks like about half. MassDOT did release some concepts last fall. That stemmed from the AET and the need to address the aging viaduct. Since then the consultant team has been working with MassDOT and has been starting to think about what kinds of interchange alternatives there are and what groupings we can look into. As we go forward, all of the concepts need to be expanded to touch on the Cambridge Street improvements and the pedestrian and bicycle topics we have discussed and that have been brought to the table. I wanted to mention that MassDOT has engaged the folks at Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) to look at the regional traffic demand model. Our team will be working closely with them. We'll be able to take that data and then be able to test the various concepts that we all come up with.

Moving forward, here is one of the two earlier concepts released last fall. It realigns the Turnpike and it provides two connections onto Cambridge Street. The on-ramps are at one location and the off-ramps are at a different location. This concept does provide for some expansion capability with the track layover to South Station and also provides for the Back Bay U-turn. Also shown in the orange is a future local street grid network. We are looking to see how this would work and connect up to that. The second concept is very similar however in this concept the ramp connections vary. In this concept the westerly ramps connect at one location and the easterly ramps connect at another location. This alternative also requires lengthening the Cambridge Street Overpass on the Turnpike for the on-ramp turns to go westbound. We are starting to move towards these various groupings. There are three groupings. The first grouping pairs up so there are two connections to Cambridge Street. One of the intersections handles the on-ramp moves and the other handles the off-ramp moves. With this we have provisions that we're looking at for rail improvements and a West Station platform. It realigns the Turnpike and addresses the aging viaduct.

Group two, again is a similar suburban type interchange. It is taking up more space, has more sweeping curves and again, the major difference is the pairing of the ramps. At each of the ramp locations you have both an on-ramp and an off-ramp connection. Group two still provides provisions and connections for the rail, realigns the Turnpike and addresses the deficiencies with the aging viaduct. Now for group three. This grouping is more of an urban type of interchange. It's going to take up less space because it is a compressed scenario. We were originally looking at this as more of a collector/distributor type of an interchange and now as we've taken a closer look at this, it is what some may call a split diamond configuration. In this lay out you have two different crossings of the mainline which act like a diamond interchange. These two crossings help disperse some of the traffic and create connections to Cambridge Street. In this particular alternative we have three connections to Cambridge

Street; two primary from the highway ramp system and a third from a westerly ramp connection heading westbound. There are similar goals here as in looking to realign the mainline, looking to incorporate the rail elements of the project, providing future connections for the roadways and with all of these to date, looking at the traffic moves. We know going forward there is a lot of interest regarding the pedestrian and bicycle improvements and that is where these alternatives will continue to be developed with more detail.

Q: AO: Just a quick question, why is there a third connection there? It seems superfluous.

A: CC: Part of it is to help disperse some of the traffic. We actually have variations within all three of these. We have other groupings that have four connections. Basically it helps disperse some of the traffic to that the traffic is not focused at one location along Cambridge Street.

C: AO: Okay, thank you.

C: CC: In terms of MassDOT's priorities, Mike started to talk about this earlier in the evening and these are really just some of our initial thoughts. We have categorized the project into different types of groupings. We have the interchange, we have Cambridge Street, we have transit improvements and we have the viaduct. I think a lot of the discussion we are hearing tonight certainly fall into one of these categories. Some of these are core elements to the project and for the interchange, Cambridge Street itself, more Complete Streets, better connections, context sensitive designs, supporting the South Station Expansion and some of the lay over areas that will be required there. What we heard most of however was that this is about the neighborhood. We have heard a lot about how this project can help connect the neighborhoods. We don't want to look to take properties we want to minimize the takings. As with any project, we need to look closely along Cambridge Street to make sure we minimize these takings in all of the designs so that we don't have to create displacements and so that we are aware of some of the sensitively there. Looking at construction, we don't think this task force will get into construction elements but certainly as the project moves forward and the designs move forward, we need to account for how this will be constructed. Certainly from a neighborhood perspective the construction elements will be very important. I think that was our initial priorities of working with MassDOT.

Q: WM: Perhaps a community benefit line specific to the impact that it's going to have on the neighborhoods in relation to the Turnpike itself. I know they did that for East Boston and South Boston for the Ted Williams Tunnel. Those are some of the concerns I have.

A: CC: Okay, we can consider doing that.

C: WM: Thank you.

C: CC: We also have to work with some financial and fiscal constraints of the project in addition to the timeline that is available. Right now the project is programed on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and we need to be sensitive to the scope of this project so that it does get constructed. Most folks understand there is a great opportunity here but we need to challenge that opportunity and make sure the project is truly implementable and that we can actually build this project. On the concept side of things, I'd like to just brush through some of the ideas we have. In the next meeting we're going to start thinking about further details within each of those groupings and really drill down into each one of those concepts. Another thing to put out there as we move forward is the constraints of the area, fiscal constraints, regulatory constraints and operational constraints. We thought we'd brainstorm with you next time as well and get some feedback as to what the constraints are going to be moving forward with the design. Two things we wanted to throw out there for our next meeting.

C: EI: We have about an hour left. There are three things we want to do in this hour. We want to talk a little bit about the next meeting, where it is, when it is. We want to talk about the schedule and if there is time left, we'll let the general members of the public make a comment or ask a question. Most importantly I think we should get a little more detailed input now that you've seen some of the concepts

and put a little more detail to the general concerns and priorities that you expressed as part of the introduction. Does that sound good? Does that sound reasonable?

I'm also standing here thinking the transportation types in the room probably understood those concepts but maybe not everyone did. A question before we go forward, would anyone like to have either Chris or Mike walk you through the moves and the turns of those various concepts for example if you're coming down Cambridge Street and you want to go on the Turnpike, how you do so. Do you want to spend 10 minutes doing that? Once you go through the first one the others can go more quickly. Chris I think it would be useful if you started with the Turnpike going towards the city and provide a few different examples and go through those moves.

Q: NCC: Chris, why don't you come deliver from this side so more people can see?

A: CC: Alright. If you're coming into the city from this direction and you're heading along the Turnpike, right now you have the toll plaza you have to deal with. What we are looking to do is straighten this out which is currently in the rail yards today and be able to come in here, take an off-ramp, go under the highway in this case and come up to the intersection at Cambridge Street. Similar to the off-ramp, if you're heading west you could take this ramp and connect to this intersection at Cambridge Street.

C: El: Chris, tell them what happens at that intersection.

A: CC: This would be a signalized intersection. Again you'd have the potential for further connections to these roadways shown in orange.

Q: El: When you come up to the Cambridge Street intersection, you would be able to turn left and right?

C: CC: Yes that is correct.

Q: PB: I'm assuming that is the Double Tree intersection?

A: CC: The Double Tree is a little bit further north towards the Charles River. Coming from the other direction and you want to get onto the Turnpike in either direction, you would come through the signalized intersection, take this ramp to go to the west or you could come through here and get onto the ramp heading east towards Boston.

Q: NNG: The Cambridge Overpass goes away in both of these?

A: CC: The Cambridge Street Overpass is looking to go away in all of our options. We are looking to bring Cambridge Street to more of an at grade layout.

C: El: Cambridge Street becomes more of a three with one, two or even three signalized intersections with a much more city-like traffic flow than the higher speed connection that currently exist today.

C: CC: Group two is very similar, again if you're coming from west heading towards the city you would come through here and take this on map, go under I-90 and come to this signalized intersection and be able to take full left or right turns here and you would have the further roadway connections shown in orange. If you're coming out of the city and heading west you want to take this ramp, come up here and then you would come to this new intersection here. Those are the two off-ramp maneuvers that exist in this concept. If you wanted to get onto the Turnpike you would come to one of these intersections this one here is actually for east bound come through here take this ramp go under the highway and head east towards Boston. The other intersection if you wanted to go west you would take this ramp and head west on I-90.

Q: WL: The further roadways that are indicated in orange, do those connect to Western Avenue?

A: CC: Yes

C: El: Before we switch to the next one, the key thing about these two what we are calling suburban type interchanges is you've got a lot of ramp work, your taking up a lot of potential space and when you switch to the urban from the suburban it achieves the same things but tightens up the ramp work to be parallel to the highway.

C: CC: It is a much more compressed layout for this particular concept.

Q: AO: Excuse me. Could you explain how you would get from West Station, both north and south in all the alternatives? I don't know if it is different in each alternative but if there is a rail station, how would you access it?

A: CC: We are still working these types of things out. We don't have any defined routes yet. That's kind of why you see this as a shaded area. We need to take this further and get ideas from you folks. Right now we are we don't have anything drawn up for that.

Q: DL: In the next iteration, could you please add to that map shaded areas that show Harvard land and other development land that would be freed up as part of this project?

A: CC: Yes, I think we could probably show some type of parcel as far as ownerships goes in here.

Q: NNG: Could I ask you one quick question? When you look at the exit ramp today coming off the Turnpike and heading towards Cambridge during peak hours, the line of traffic is so long it seems like it would overlap with those intersections. Don't you think this would be a problem?

A: CC: The critical aspects of this project are going to be us looking closely at the operations of these intersections. As I mentioned earlier CTPS is going to look at this as more of a regional traffic model. We will then take that data and test that to see that we don't have queuing. We can't have such that at this intersection it backs up all the way onto the mainline, that creates safety concerns and we don't want that. This right now is the initial thinking, we haven't thrown our traffic volume network on them and proposed ramp movements and volumes but that will all be coming to make sure we don't have that queuing and all of those serious traffic jams that exist today.

C: El: If you take the input that would come from traffic modeling. The kinds of things that could happen, say you're trying to make this one work as an example. The number of lanes right here might change so you could store those cars and get them to the intersection. The intersection might change, it could be two lanes turning right two lanes turning left, a lane going in the center. When you start thinking about that there is a lot of permutation in traffic analysis that we need to go forward with, particularly to see what it would take to make each one of these alternatives work. If you're a commuter from Framingham and you're going to Genzyme every morning, what are you facing, how does it compare to what's existing now and how do we handle the bicycles and pedestrians and all the other access across those intersections.

C: PB: It's also an impact to that neighborhood too. What it seems like is similar to a rubber band and all that congestion at the edge of the Cambridge street ramp at the intersection right by the river, all your doing is pulling it back into the neighborhoods and I'm looking at those houses there and then they would have to experience all of that traffic that today collects at the intersection by the hotel today.

Q: GN: Not being a traffic guy I have a question about the split diamond. Are the cars going to have to slow down to 15 MPH to make that sharp right turn?

A: CC: This intersection here would be signalized and they would have to go through the signal.

Q: El: Can anyone think of an example of this that exists today?

- A: JC: Underneath the Turnpike near South Station as you're coming through from Dorchester, the road is parallel. There is a big brown line at the bottom of the drawing that is near what looks like a blue pair of pants. To the south of that when you take the exit, if you're coming in from Newton and you go to the right lane, you slow down and you 15 MPH on the right hand side or the left hand side.
- C: El: Right, this parallel roadway would be running slowly and the mainline traffic would be going through the center.
- C: GB: If you look at what the Big Dig built at Mass Ave this almost looks about 98% the same.
- C: NNG: Just sitting there watching the cars out my window all day long, I'm surprised that on all your designs that one way or another there is a substantial amount of traffic towards the neighborhoods and 25% of that traffic is still going to towards the Cambridge Street and River intersection because everyone is trying to access Storrow Drive. If you go down towards the blue pants area if you don't somehow put a direct access point onto Storrow Drive which would remove a good quarter of the traffic out of all the neighborhoods and the Allston area. I didn't notice that in any of your designs and maybe it is there and I am just missing it.
- Q: El: Just to clarify, I believe you are talking about making this move?
- A: BH: It's actually not so bad going out of town its really bad going into town. That's why the traffic backs up onto the Turnpike because everybody's trying to cross over and make the right onto Storrow Drive and that's 25-30% of all the traffic at the Soldiers Field Road, Cambridge Street intersection. A lot of this traffic is not going into the neighborhoods, it's actually going into Cambridge and an even more substantial portion is going into Boston. Everyone gets off on Storrow Drive and there is an opportunity to access Storrow Drive from the Turnpike and relieve a tremendous amount of traffic from Cambridge Street which would be an enormous benefit for the Allston community.
- Q: HM: I have a question that comes up when looking at your designs is what you've evaluated or rejected or you haven't yet considered. When I look at these and say gee, there's no east-west road between the Mass Pike and Cambridge Street. Is that because you think it is a bad idea? Is that because you haven't thought of it yet? It's sort of hard for me to understand.
- A: El: At this point we don't think anything is a bad idea.
- C: HM: I'm sure there are things that we could suggest that you would say financially or otherwise are not a good idea.
- A: El: Putting in a giant, elevated highway is probably not a good idea. Going underground is probably too financially constrained and going with multiple viaduct levels is probably not sufficient. Trying to elevate everything is probably constrained and trying to go below grade is probably constrained for a number of reasons.
- C: CC: These alternatives are kind of like a representative schematic. Behind each one of these there are three or four variations or concepts. This concept could have 4 connections or 2 connections there are some other ideas that we have. This is more of a representative grouping and our thought is that in our next meeting with you we would be able to step through those concepts at a greater detail. Again we're here to listen to your ideas for example having an east-west connection.
- Q: HM: Not to get into the details specifically and minds on the map. I think it would be very helpful that if in advance to the next meeting you turned some of these into 3A, 3B and 3C with some written analysis as to why we don't see a direct connection to Storrow Drive in any of your designs. To Bruce's point, why is that? Is that because there is a safety issue, cost issue, you haven't considered it yet? There are

all sorts of questions we could ask if we knew more about why you've drawn some of the lines. Why three connections are better than five or two.

- A: CC: Well again, this is a task force, we are welcoming your ideas we don't have them ready to email out to folks we want to step through them at the next meeting and show you where we are and what we're thinking. We're in the earlier stages of this and we have a long ways to go. When you ask for us to show you the analysis we don't have that yet. We're still working with CTPS. We're working with traffic folks so we do have a long ways to go.
- C: HM: But we only have nine more task force meetings.
- A: CC: Understood; we admit this is a full schedule.
- C: El: From a conceptual standpoint I think we can address additional east-west connections to Storow Drive. I don't think you're looking for the intersection traffic analysis to see if this works yet but having thought of these ideas.
- Q: WL: Each one of these still has a curve in it. It seems to me that you could have a straight line through the light blue area. My question is why haven't you done that?
- A: MOD: As we mentioned earlier on regarding the reasons for the project. One of the main reasons is to accommodate for a future West Station.
- C: WL: But you can put the station on the other side.
- C: MOD: But it also needs to accommodate many of the support facilities that the MBTA and our rail and transit section would need to achieve and maintain that station connection. Inevitably we would need to have a location there that would be able to accommodate additional cars, future commuter rail cars and maintain the services to and from South Station all the way out to Worcester. The intent is to be able to provide a two station platform that I'm told in the future would also be able to accommodate DMU services. Our Secretary of Transportation is anticipating that DMU service which is lighter rail than commuter rail stock that you often see and many of you take to and from work every day. DMU service is able to operate at quicker and more efficient services. We're looking as many of you said, we want to look at 21st century transportation and by keeping this area open and available to us it shows us that we can provide the rail service that we want to achieve for the commuters and our customer base for the 21st century.
- C: El: I see Glen has a question.
- Q: GB: Just two quick questions. The first has to do with the U-turn that is there today and the second has to do with AET. On group three, is it a conscious part of your design that you could come westbound, get off at the interchange, take the first left in the dark blue area and then take another left and start heading eastbound. Is that something that you tried to provide in group three that doesn't seem to appear in group two or group one? That's my first question. The second question is if one assumes that AET will be on the mainline where would it be and are all the ramp connections going to be covered by AET or would it be separate between the mainline and the ramps?
- A: CC: I will answer the second question first and then hopefully others can help answer the Back Bay U-turn scenario. Right now, the mainline will have the gantry system both to the west and the east of this interchange. The idea is that you go through the gantry, you get picked up and you take this exit. It won't pick you up as you continue into the city because you got off. There is no collection point on the ramp system itself. It's all on the mainline. As you run the mainline it keeps picking you up until you get off.
- Q: HM: So you pay two tolls from Newton to downtown?

- A: MOD: That has not yet been determined as to whether or not those gantry systems would be established on both eastbound and westbound barrels at both locations. That's part of the ongoing study at MassDOT and is under a different section.
- C: Mark Gravallesse (MG): Just to be clear about the gantry locations as Chris has shown just west of Cambridge Street and from the viaduct to the Commonwealth Avenue bridge, just off the turnpike. It's only a little bit further up.
- Q: Community Resident (CR): I don't mean to be piling on but the way you have it styled there, you've still got cars on Cambridge Street and traffic problems at the intersections. It's not going to solve any problems unless you put it on Storrow Drive. Can you design a schematic that will put in a ramp so we can avoid the traffic that will obviously still be there if you do it this way?
- A: CC: I believe when we get into group three we do have some connections that come off these ramps and maybe come over to Soldiers' Field Road and have a right in and a right out connection. What that does is pull some of the traffic off of Cambridge Street and allows you to take Soldiers' Field Road right into the city. Those are ideas that will be brought further into our concepts.
- Q: El: Mike, could you help us answer the Back Bay U-turn question?
- A: Mike Hall (MH): Sure. For those who don't know me, my name is Mike Hall and I am with TetraTech. I will be working on the traffic analysis effort for this project. Glen to answer your question, this option or family or group of options does a better job with the U-turn today for example if you are coming out and exit on the westbound off-ramp. You're going to come up to a traffic light. You can take a left it would be two way under or over the highway to the next light on the other frontage road. In group one or group two you'd actually have to get off at Cambridge Street and go down Cambridge Street and in this case it would be really tough because essentially it is just a U-turn. What we see right now is a huge advantage of using the frontage road system to help accommodate for the Back Bay U-turn.
- Q: WL: Referring back to Bruce's question and maybe this is a tough one to start off with. Have you looked at the regional nature of what the Turnpike is handling here? Just about a mile down the road, there are multiple MassDOT studies looking at the Bowker and the potential ramps on and off the mainline. Bruce was talking about the volumes of traffic that are going towards Fenway, the MFA, and Back Bay. With this enormous project that's going on I think it would make sense in the bigger regionally picture to figure out where traffic is going and to replicating the moves that are here now in a somewhat different geometry as oppose to actually looking at it as part of a system. Given that, MassDOT is looking at some very expansive projects about a mile away and thinking about that more broadly perhaps makes sense to do.
- A: CC: It's a challenge to avoid expanding the scope beyond what's reasonable. Right now we'll tell you that we've really been looking at the interchange. We know there are other studies going on. I know I mentioned earlier we do have some fiscal constraints on the project. The major challenge here is really the scope and how expansive this project can get. We also have to make sure the project is implementable from a permit perspective. Whether or not we have historic impacts to Soldiers Field Road is an example. These are some of the challenges we are faced with. It's a good idea and I don't have an answer that says yes, we will look at it or no, we won't look at.
- Q: JR: When we went around earlier the vast majority of comments talked about knitting the neighborhood back together and improving pedestrian and bicycle connection. It would be really fantastic to see these schematics as little dotted lines. For example this is where we may envision having a new pedestrian access point across the Turnpike because between Cambridge Street and the BU Bridge, or this is the longest stretch of the Great Wall of China dividing the city in the entire urban area. It would really be great to have some of those things in the mix early on so as we are playing around with the configuration of the lines we can include those.

A: CC: Good point.

Q: CR: To follow up on just what she said, where is the access to the south: to Brookline, to Fenway Park, to the Longwood Medical Area? I understand if you're going to have a highway, you have to access both sides. I know a bridge cost money, I know an overpass cost money, we understand that but my point is there isn't any so the only way is through my neighborhood. No fair! Can you explain that brown line again? Is that a ring road? Are you saying there's a throughway on that line?

Q: CC: This brown line here?

A: CR: No, directly abutting the blue portion. The crescent shaped blue portion. I thought there was a brown dotted line that somebody spoke of that you can drive along.

A: JR: I believe that is the frontage road system to help with the on and off-ramp connections.

C: CR: Go down and stop! That part there. That's a road right?

A: CC: No, that is the railroad track.

C: CR: Okay great but let's cross it. Automobiles have to cross it. Look at the Medical Center and Fenway Park people want to go there daily, they got to go through my neighborhood.

C: El: So if I understand correctly you're talking about connections across here.

Q: CR: Yes. Isn't that what highways do?

A: CC: Yes they do.

C: CR: But not in this case.

Q: AO: I know that you guys are trying to take everything to grade which is really exciting. I want to understand what that means? We all know that one of the outcomes for this project will hopefully be the creation of some sort of new urban fabric in that northern part of land, that developable part of land; right now we have on and off-ramps almost the length of Harvard Avenue which is home to hundreds of thousands of people. What is the long term permeability of the on and off-ramps and are we really just bisecting the developable land here? Will the ramps never be touched?

A: El: Let me see if I understand your question correctly. You're asking if you could access this area from this road. Are these pure limited access ramps or are they streets?

C: AO: Yes, thank you. That is what I'm asking.

A: CC: I think it is a fair question going forward; there is a lot of developable land in here. When we are looking at these interchanges we certainly don't want to preclude that development but we have to be sensitive to what those connections are they still have to handle a lot of traffic. We want to make them work so they can work in the future. It is Harvard's land and we are not sure what is going to happen there and we don't want to preclude certain development opportunities.

Q: AO: Are the lengths of those ramps necessary? Is there something on the table to create a new east-west connection?

A: CC: The length is really the fact that you've got some constraints here with the rail and you want to straighten out the mainline but at the same time you want to get from the mainline over to Cambridge Street. The length is really what you need to get there.

- C: AO: Right so in my mind if we had a new Cambridge Street or a closer connection you could straighten those ramps. That way it could become more of an urban fabric not that Harvard is willing to do anything related to that at all.
- C: El: In this entire concept because the intersections are signalized these become slower speed streets and much more approachable compared to the longer faster sweeping ramps.
- Q: TR: I would just like to echo the comments made by the gentleman over here regarding transit service. In terms of transit Harvard is a major employer and Harvard has already been contemplating bus rapid transit down to at least Cambridge Street. It appears that there would be room for it at the Longwood Medical Area and I can't believe that the connections between Harvard and the Longwood Medical area via transit are not as important as a goal as they should be. The question is how will this new infrastructure accommodate rapid transit service from this area down to the commonwealth area? I think there is a way to do it but I think that it is an important issue to look at. The second issue is if you are already making these connections to the Turnpike and you're going to have to get over the layover facility to a new West Station anyway which you are creating access to a new West Station over the layover facility further connecting the Allston neighborhood to this area, why not just continue those connections to Commonwealth Avenue to really reknit the north-south fabric of the city. It is something to be explored. The third issue is that I haven't heard anyone mention yet and it becomes more apparent everyday as reports come out from the Federal Government. Your right next to the river, the topography here is such that you're not going up very high and you need to think about resiliency so how are we looking at resiliency as we are looking at this new infrastructure and this new neighborhood?
- A: El: That is an excellent point. As these concepts develop we will be looking at the relative elevation and the Charles River in the most severe storms and going forward through the design will be very important. That's a great point.
- C: VG: This goes back to what we were hearing before and taking all the traffic moves in and around this area and putting them onto Cambridge Street. That's what all of the schemes seem to be doing and it will obviously have huge impacts on the neighborhoods north of Cambridge Street and new neighborhoods that may development south of Cambridge Street. It's really important to think from the onset to think about where you are showing that yellow line just north not just as traffic related but at a city street in the picture. There is a finer grain between Cambridge Street and where the mainline is. I think it has to be in the beginning of the discussion. What you have right now is essentially a long off-ramp and a long on-ramp. I wanted to add to what Tad was saying relative to a West Station. You really have to make that part of the discussion from the very beginning. Access to that station is going to take away from some of the traffic in the model that you otherwise would experience on neighborhood streets. It's important to make sure that access from both sides to West Station is easy and safe.
- Q: DL: I have a comment and two questions. Group one you have just to note you have a three level interchange. That would result in a 40-50 foot elevated section or bridge structure. The two questions I have relate to Storrow Drive. What percent of the traffic currently exits off Cambridge Street and turns onto Storrow Drive? The second question I have and it is really more of a request is that the part along the Charles River gets to a point where it is extremely narrow and substandard. There are only a few feet of trees on either side and as you approach Cambridge Street it goes down to about a six foot path. The point is that whatever happens in terms of access to Storrow Drive it should be considered that any type of movement to Storrow Drive particularly in the blue section in the lower right allows for movement to the Storrow Drive allows for the potential widening of the park land.
- Q: El: Mike do you know the volumes for the right-turn onto Cambridge Street?
- A: MH: I do know the volumes I don't have a percentage. In terms of numbers it's about 550 cars in the morning peak hour and in the afternoon it's about 500. That's east to west turning onto Storrow Drive.

Q: El: How about going either way not just turning east to west onto Storrow Drive?

A: MH: It is around 1,500-1,600 in both peaks. It's fairly uniform.

C: BH: Just two quick comments, if you're talking about the blue pants area and I don't know if it is capable but I encourage you to look at the highline project in NYC and they used the elevated park what was once a roadway and made it into an open space park. That's an additional way to enhancing Allston with a stronger connection the river. I don't know if you could take it all the way down to the BU Bridge in terms of access for the community towards the river. That is called the Highline Project and it is in New York City. My second comment is separate from that and it is a project of this size and this scope nothing ever goes the way you expect it to and I'm sure you don't think it will go exactly how you expect it to. I noticed that your task force ends with the project going on for quite a few years after that and you're going to have construction issues and access issues and I encourage you although I'm sticking my foot in my mouth and I'm not looking for a multiyear job but to somehow include the community and inform them every quarter or every six months as to how the project is going and to ask them for their input and to hear their problems all the way to the end of the construction period. I think that is what is happening in most task forces certain looking at Harvard. It is a continuum rather than an expectation on the community to have this input for the three months in the beginning then say see you later. Particularly since it is not set and you are still planning it.

A: MOD: Bruce, we recognize that fully well and you bring up a good point. The objective for this task force and for us at MassDOT is to get as much of the input on developing the preferred alternatives. Certainly we will be taking into account some of the construction related impacts may be in developing the preferred alternative. Beyond that point once we get into the environmental process and we start soliciting a lot of the public venue, certainly there will be need to convene and maybe not as often as we are while we are developing some of the preliminary alternatives but we will have to convene just to communicate back to the task force what the impacts are going to be during construction and how we plan to handle it. Until that time and until we have an understanding as to a preferred ultimate outcome will be for all of us then we can start detailing what the constructional impacts are going to be. Certainly that is going to be part of the criteria that we will need to consider as a group, what are the construction impacts going to be, use that as the criteria to screen out many of the alternatives that are going to branch out from many of the groups you see. We are focused right now on developing a preferred alternative but there is no doubt in my mind that it is going to point back and we are going to need to reconvene just so we can communicate to you what the impacts are going to be.

C: BH: I would like to have a relationship with you for years to come [laughter].

A: MOD: At least until 2020.

C: MG: If I could just add to that for you Bruce, when this project does go to construction it will be district six construction office and by all means there will be communication with the community to help. This will be a rather large project for us, we have many other rather large projects that we have done in the past but there will be a robust community process that goes into the contract and you will have construction staff on hand to answer your questions along the way. It's not as though once we are done with our taskforce process the communication will be done. There will be plenty of MassDOT communication through the entire length of the process.

Q: HM: Regarding some of Tads comments and trying to raise some new issues, I was wondering what your thoughts are in terms of parking capacity and parking location for West Station. I'm impressed we've made it through an hour and a half of a meeting without talking about parking yet.

A: El: That's a great question and the truth is we don't know. I don't know if anyone knows.

- A: MOD: First of all that is a great point to bring up. We continue to talk about West Station but how do you get there from here. That is something we need to consider, where is the access to West Station going to be? Once we can identify how to get there we need to consider if there is going to be a large demand. How far into the future is this? Is West Station actually going to be a part of this project or is it going to be part of a future project. Perhaps we don't have all the answers but we need to start with baby steps. That's what this is all about. The first thing we wanted to do was make sure we were at least heading in the right direction. We can start building from this, west station and access to west station, pedestrian movements and bicycle desire lines. Now, is there going to be available parking, is it a surface lot? We don't have all the answers for you, Harry but certainly we're going to start looking into developing answers for those questions for you. We didn't want to get so far down the road that you were under the impression that we have already developed a preferred alternative. We are far from it.
- Q: MD: A couple of questions. How is Cambridge Street Overpass going to be effected? I think you said in all alternatives it will have to be changed. My other question is I was just in Houston and this is actually the most common type of design they use. One thing they do is that they use a lot of small streets so you could actually have an entire street grid in there that you don't have all the traffic focused on three roads, you actually have a grid that distributes traffic all over. I hope that you will include ideas how to get across this highway so that people will be able to walk, bike and drive all more easily north to south and to the river as well.
- A: CC: I think back to your first point about the Cambridge Street Overpass, depending on the mainline configuration with the ramps. You have four lanes of traffic trying to squeeze under that last span that's now the highway span. If we have some on ramps coming in here we need to provide enough room to provide onramps and vehicles to get enough speed to get onto the highway safely. There are scenarios depending on how far back we have these ramps if those on ramps and acceleration lanes have to go through here where we would have to lengthen that span and redo Cambridge Street.
- Q: MD: If that does happen is there a possibility of lowering the elevation of Cambridge Street?
- A: CC: I think we would absolutely look at that. You still have this issue with the rail. We would look at the profile in general and look at the minimum elevation to still meet the clearances of the rail
- C: MOD: I didn't hear any sudden gasps or sighs from anybody relative to Cambridge Street and proposed improves
- C: PF: I think there were about 10 heart attacks.
- C: MOD: I mentioned in November to Mark Grallevese there were a lot of questions, the chief among them being "is MassDOT really considering investing somewhere in the ballpark of seven to ten million dollars to replace the layout of Cambridge Street and does that limit our evaluation of alternatives to that particular location?" I received a few hand written letters on that same topic that I read several of, most likely all and the commitment that we made to you is that we have a concern for deck safety, ridership safety along Cambridge Street. At that time we were and we still are prepared to make that investment to correct that deck deficiency but we were not going to state that we cannot, we're not going to preclude further replacements of Cambridge Street as a result of this. We need to identify what we feel to be the best interchange improvement for all multimodal access users. If for some reason Cambridge street is going to conflict with our ability to get there then our administrator had mentioned earlier in letters that we are prepared to replace the Cambridge Street Bridge if need be. I recognize that from a tax payer's perspective as I am and all of you are that it could be \$7 million that MassDOT has invested and spent but also keep in mind that we have a responsibility to maintain safety at that location considering we very likely won't be into construction for a few more years. Addressing that deficiency and addressing that issue is paramount to us. Just to set everyone's minds at ease, this should not be coming to a shock to anyone.

Q: PB: Is any of this subject to Harvard's approval where they own the land where these new ramps and road are being drawn in. Does Harvard have to sign off on that as the land owner?

A: MOD: Certainly we are coordinating our efforts with them but I believe we have a number of Harvard representatives here as part of our task force. They are as committed to getting this right as any of us are in this room.

Q: PB: I'm saying in terms of the community had a preferred option here and it wasn't Harvard's preferred option, would they have the right to veto it?

A: MOD: This is why they are participating with us on the task force.

Q: PB: Do you think you have the right to do it or will it require their permission?

A: MOD: We have the right to build transportation infrastructure that will accommodate all users.

Q: PB: So they have to approve it?

A: MOD: I don't think they necessarily have to approve it but certainly we need to coordinate and demonstrate as we would with any other property owner that what we are doing is the most prudent and the most feasible and addresses all of the concerns that all of the task force members have. Harvard is really just a member of the task force community but they also are property owners.

Q: JR: Just a quick clarification on that. Some of us have been trying to figure out the exactly details as to who owns what. Is it the case that the green study area that was shown on a previous slide is owned by Harvard or is it just MassDOT easements? Does MassDOT actually own some of the land and there's only a swap happening?

A: MOD: No, MassDOT maintains transportation easements over that land. There is a good portion of that land Harvard does own.

Q: JR: In the future when we have negotiations about preferred alternatives, are they going to be about where the easements are?

A: MOD: Yes, ultimately as a result of us building a new interchange we will establish new transportation easements over that area.

Q: MD: Are you going to present any alternatives to the footbridge over the Turnpike?

A: CC: Yes that's actually part of our scope is to look at what would happen to this bridge and in context to the entire interchange. We want to hear from you folks about pedestrian and bicycle desire lines. We will be looking at whether the footbridge needs to stay or whether it needs to move.

Q: GB: This question is just meant as background to help educate us as a group. The light blue area is obviously the proposed West Station but the main part of my question is trying to refer to the light blue area that will be used for the South Station Expansion. Obviously there will be one or two mainline tracks that will serve the Worcester line. My question is if you assume that the one or two mainlines of the Worcester branch will be where they are today, does the whole rest of the light blue area which looks to be between six and twelve tracks of rail storage have to stay?

A: EI: I think you're talking about dividing the rail yard with a highway?

Q: GB: I'm not trying to be that specific, I'm just wondering if we able to move the light blue rail storage?

- C: EI: In essence you're asking if you could swap the rail yard and the highway. Just to simplify the question.
- C: GB: The reverse way of saying it is that one might infer that you've always left the light blue rail storage in all of your options either because you think that it is literally the best place for it or you think you don't legally have the right to move it.
- A: MOD: Matt Cibrowski works with MassDOT in our planning section and is very familiar with this particular location, the South Station expansion and the needs for further commuter rail expansion at this location. I will let him address this question.
- A: Matthew Cibrowski (MC): To answer your question to a very basic point, there is absolutely no need for the rail tracks to be where they are. I've been looking at this from a rail perspective for almost two years now and I can't find a way to do it in order to get access to every other location. What everyone has been referring to as the blue pants area down at the bottom portion of the picture is a very complex, crowded area that is occupied at ground level by Soldiers Field Road, by some park land, by a bicycle path and by rail tracks. Maintaining access over the Grand Junction Bridge is obviously very important. We are open to ideas if they maintain the needs of the MBTA to maintain and store those trains. I've been trying real hard to do it and I can't seem to figure out a way to make it happen other than keeping it the way it's shown here.
- Q: JR: Currently some of the other tracks go up further along the Charles River to that other rail yard.
- A: MC: Yes
- Q: JR: Okay, not that I'm saying you want rail storage to be there but your saying that would no longer be a viable option?
- A: MC: It is a very difficult place to access on a regular basis. Right now it is what CSX calls the tear drop area with has access to the Houghton Chemical tracks in that area. It is a difficult place to access and depending on how you do it, it may require certain trains to stop and turn around. It's a potential spot that we have looked at a little bit but again, putting a rail yard there can pose some difficulties as well. We do have to maintain the freight access of Houghton Chemical.
- Q: HM: Just because you mentioned rail access to Bruce Houghton and the future Houghton Chemical and it's not on any of your drawings here but it seems to certainly impact. Can you explain where there is an active rail line in the drawing?
- A: CC: There is a part that comes through here and up through there.
- C: HM: If you could draw that on the future maps or drawings that would be very helpful.
- C: MOD: Bruce might feel a little bit better about that too.
- Q: HM: Is there a legal easement that is maintained? How does that work?
- A: BH: That rail service provides us with a variety of products. We are a major deicing chemical supplier to Logan Airport for the major snow storms and a lot of that storage is used to hold material. That material all comes in by rail and we are also at a great location. It gives us great accessibility. As far as the rail access route is concerned we do need that.
- Q: HM: I'm wondering legally is MassDOT and Harvard and the MBTA required to continue that?

- A: MH: CSX is the primary provider and CSX maintains a service easement over the entire area. If they want to be at service at that location we have to allow them to service it. If we want to get rid of them it will be a long complicated process with the Service Transportation Board.
- Q: HM: That would be between you and CSX? Not you, CSX and Bruce Houghton?
- A: MH: That would be between us and CSX and CSX would be acting on the behalf of their customers.
- C: El: We are almost out of time and Galen has had his hand up for a while. Here is what I would like to do. Address Galen's comment, do a couple housekeeping items, Nate's got something to announce and then we will officially end at 8:00PM. We can stay around to answer any more questions afterwards. I thought we received a lot good comments starting with how you drive through the interchange.
- Q: GM: On the same theme, we are shrinking the rail lines where they currently are on all of the designs. Do we know a number of tracks that are necessary for the proposed South Station bay? How many tracks should be expected?
- A: MH: Yes, the South Station Expansion Project has determined that in order to accommodate the future need for rail service we need to provide storage for at least 20 trains in this area. Tracks would be inappropriate way to lay it out because there could be multiple trains on a single track.
- Q: HM: How many acres is that? Could you put that into terms of size?
- A: MH: Storing one train is about 950 feet of linear track.
- C: GM: If you could express that in terms of how much this is shrinking compared to what we have today, that would be very nice.
- A: MH: Yes I can look at how many tracks there are now. You can almost see at the top edge of the rail yard.
- C: GM: A lot of that is truck access and I assume that is also going to go away. There is also the Grand Junction line which I don't assume is going to go away.
- C: El: Great, thank you. Nate had something to say.
- C: NCC: In terms of my house keeping detail, I heard from Paul about his issue with the incorrect address. The emails that went out on Monday and that Mike referred to as the letter; I sent out each one of those individually to make sure that I didn't get any bounce backs. I did not get any bounce backs so if you did not receive an email, it's because it is somewhere out there. Please double check the sign-in sheets and take a moment as you go to make sure that the email address is right, if not, correct it. Eventually I'd like to have that as a solid list so I'm not sending out 45 emails one at a time.
- Q: El: While you're speaking, could you address the minutes from this meeting? Do you have a time we can expect those?
- A: NCC: As we said, the goal is to have the minutes from these meetings back to the task force within seven working days. That is something that we will strive for. If we have a particularly complicated set it may take longer. The goal is to have the minutes back to you in seven working days.
- C: El: Two quick items for the next meeting. Agenda items, we did mention that we will future be developing these concepts. We may be coming to you to further develop some of these concepts and we'll go through some of the physical constraints that are affecting the design of the site. We have tentatively schedule the next meeting for May 21, 2014. How does that work for everybody?

A: PW: Our civic group meets on the third Wednesday of every month.

C: MD: I just want to say that Wednesday's are the most popular day for scheduling. I think it will come up with a lot of conflicts.

C: NCC: Okay. For now the next two meeting will be held on Wednesday's and then we can take it from there.

C: El: Thank you everyone again for coming out and have a good night.

Next Steps

The next meeting of the taskforce will be held on Wednesday, May 21st at 6:00PM in the Honan Branch Library. The library is located at 300 North Harvard Street. The taskforce session after that will take place on June 11th at the Fiorentino Community Center.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Joe	Beggan	Taskforce
Paul	Berkeley	Taskforce
Glen	Berkowitz	Taskforce
Andrew	Bettinelli	Taskforce
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Chris	Calnan	TetraTech
Craig	Cashman	Taskforce
Matthew	Cibrowski	MassDOT
Nick	Clemons	Taskforce
James	Curley	Taskforce
John	Cusack	Taskforce
Donny	Dailey	MassDOT
Matthew	Danish	Taskforce
Bill	Deignan	Taskforce
Stacey	Donahoe	MassDOT
Rochelle	Dunne	Taskforce
Paola	Ferrer	Taskforce
Nicole	Freedman	Taskforce
Anabela	Gomes	Taskforce
Mark	Gravallese	MassDOT
Nick	Gross	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Vineet	Gupta	Taskforce
Mark	Handley	Taskforce
Bruce	Houghton	Taskforce
Ed	Ionata	TetraTech
John	Laadt	Taskforce
Wendy	Landman	Taskforce
Elizabeth	Leary	Taskforce
Rich	Lennox	WSP Sells
David	Loutzenheiser	Taskforce
Will	Luzier	Taskforce
Wayne	MacKenzie	Taskforce
Mary	Maguire	Taskforce
C.	Marino	Boston Police Department
Reynold	McKinney	Community resident
Thomas	Nally	A Better City
Grant	Nickerson	Taskforce
Mike	O'Dowd	MassDOT
Alana	Olsen	Taskforce
Joe	Orfant	Taskforce
Tad	Read	Taskforce
Jessica	Roberts	Taskforce
Steve	Silveira	Taskforce
David	Watson	Taskforce
John	Wicks	WSP Sells
Kevin	Wright	Taskforce
Tom	Yardley	Taskforce
Jillian	Zywien	[For Colleen Kane]