

Memo

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Contract No. E22PS02
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Date: February 7, 2012
To: Mary Ainsley – Director of Design and Construction
From: Karen Arpino-Shaffer – Deputy Program Manager/Gilbane
Beverly Johnson – Public Involvement Consultant/Bevco
Subject: Phase I: Early Bridge & Demolition
January 25, 2012
cc:

LOCATION/DATE OF MEETINGS: Somerville High School Auditorium, 81 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES

Mary Ainsley – Senior Director Design and Construction, Margaret Lackner – Director of Design, Jeff Sarin – Office of Design and Construction, Frank Murray – MBTA Transit Police, Michael McBride -HDR/Gilbane Program Manager, Karen Arpino-Shaffer-HDR/Gilbane Deputy Program Manager, Robert Cone-HDR/Gilbane Director of Design, Lee McConnell-HDR/Gilbane, Michael Izzo-HDR/Gilbane, Peter Matson-Gilbane, Beverley Johnson-Bevco, June Wu-HDR, Teresa Capuano-Bryant Associates, William Lyons-Fort Hill Associates

AGENCY/ELECTED OFFICIALS

Dan Ryan (Office of Congressman Capuano)
State Representative Carl Sciortino
State Representative Timothy Toomey, Jr.
William Deignan-City of Cambridge
Hayes Morrison-City of Somerville
Tom Bent-City of Somerville
Cassandra Koutalidis-City of Medford
C. Stoker-City of Medford

MEDIA

K. McCall-Boston Globe
Andy Metzger-Somerville Journal

OTHER ATTENDEES

Conrad Crawford-Resident
Mamish Patel-Glass Works Condo
Andra Keutmann-Glass Works Condo

Phase I: Early Bridge & Demolition – January 25, 2012

John Goros-Resident
Karen Molloy-STEP
Rob Kasson-Brick Bottom
Gloria Seijido-Conti Corp.
Ieva Broks-Resident
Filuolfo Ossini-Resident
John Moore-Resident
Charles Passauss-Resident
Paul Morrison-GLAM
Lou Seijido-Conti Corp.
Mimi Graney-Union Square Main Streets
Ian Moon-Resident
Gerald Hershkouitz-Resident
David Delaney-Resident
Carol Ghiloni-Resident
Lindsay Hamsik-Boston University
Heather Von Aelst-Brick Bottom
Ihor Chaban-Resident
Tom Avaletto-Resident
Chris Kenels-Resident
Chris Blanchard-J.F. White Contracting
Jim McGinnis-STEP
Charles Both-CDM Smith
Kristi Chase-STEP
Ken Krause-MGNA
Seta Kalajjian-Barletta
Pete Sutton-Bike To The Sea
Wig Zamore-Resident
Tom Daley-Gannett Fleming
Larry Weston-J-Track NY
George Katsoufis-DHK
Bill Meier-Lane
John Ferrari-Resident
John Gonzale-Resident
Barbara Steiner-Resident
Brian Brady-Resident

PURPOSE/SUBJECT

Provide an overview of the upcoming Phase I “Early Bridge and Demolition Work” that is scheduled to get underway in the fall of 2012; and respond to community comments and questions.

BACKGROUND

The Green Line Extension Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). This project will extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest Boston corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford, with an extension of the rail line to Medford and a spur line to Union Square in Somerville. The goals of the project are to increase mobility; encourage public transit usage; improve regional air quality; ensure a more equitable distribution of transit services; and support opportunities for sustainable development.

MEETING SUMMARY

General Overview and Updates

- Karen Arpino-Shaffer presented the meeting agenda and the schedule of upcoming public meetings as follows:
 - February 8th, 2012-Washington Street and Union Square Station Design
 - Early March-Gilman and Lowell Street Station Design
 - March/April-Ball Square and College Avenue Station Design
 - March/April-Retain walls, noise, and vibration
 - April-Community Path 30% Design Meeting
 - Fall 2012-Public Meeting with Phase I construction contractor
- Ms. Arpino-Shaffer stated that Phase I will be put out to bid in the spring, with contractor selection in the summer, and construction start in the fall, with a projected 18 month construction period.
- Karen-Arpino Shaffer also pointed out that the team has started to meet with direct abutters to discuss property lines, impacts, and other pertinent issues. She indicated that a pre-construction meeting will be held in the fall and this information will also be posted on the web site and through regular email blasts.

Overview of Phase I Work

Michael McBride provided an overview of the Phase I work. He indicated that the Phase I work is at a 75% level of design and is expected to reach a 100% level of design at the end of March. The Phase I work will include the following two components: (1) Demolition of 21 Water Street so the site can be used as a construction staging area; and (2) Reconstruction and widening of the Harvard Street Rail Bridge in Medford, and the Medford Street Rail Bridge in Somerville. Mr. McBride indicated that these two bridges were selected for the Phase I package because they have the least amount of utilities. The scopes of work for each component of the Phase I package were presented as follows:

- Demolition of 21 Water Street
Mr. McBride indicated that once the building is demolished, the site will be used as a construction staging area or as replacement parking. The demolition and clean-up is expected to be completed in 4-5 months.
- Medford Street Rail Bridge
Michael McBride pointed that the Medford Street Rail Bridge currently has three tracks (2 commuter rail and a spur line). He indicated that the bridge must be widened to accommodate two bays on each side for Green Line service. The relocation of the commuter rail tracks and construction of retaining walls will take place in another project phase. The final configuration of the bridge will encompass two Green Line tracks; two Commuter Rail Lines, and an area for Commuter Rail maintenance. Post Meeting clarification: The commuter rail maintenance track starts closer to Red Bridge and this bridge will need to carry just 4 tracks: 2 Green Line and 2 Commuter Rail.
- Harvard Street Rail Bridge
Michael McBride pointed out that the scope of work will: involve storm drainage improvements; raising the bridge to allow raising the grade of Harvard Street to alleviate in-street flooding; upgrading the existing storm water pipe from 24 inches to 30 inches which will help alleviate flooding; construction of retaining walls and noise barriers; reconstruction and widening of the bridge, which involves relocation of two commuter rail tracks for the addition of two Green Line tracks (as part of a future phase); construction of new concrete abutment extensions at each end of the existing bridge; and, relocation of

utilities. Mr. McBride indicated that the retaining wall will run from Harvard Street to Winchester Place with a height starting at 18-20 feet, and moving towards 7-8 feet as it gets closer to Winchester Place, and 300 feet of 16 foot noise walls will be added on top of the retaining wall adjacent to the residences between Winchester Court and Winchester Place, as called for in the project environment documents. Additionally, some abutment work is scheduled.

Mr. McBride indicated that the Phase I work is concentrated on the north and west side of the bridge and that additional Green Line Extension work on the south side will be done in a later phase.

– Phase I Contract Schedule

Michael McBride re-emphasized that a 100% level of design will be achieved in late March and will be advertised by the end of March so that Phase I construction can get underway this calendar year.

Mr. McBride indicated that construction will take place during normal work hours from 7am to 6pm daily, with limited weekend work. He also pointed that two traffic lanes will be maintained during construction peak hours and one lane will be maintained during “off-peak” hours. A construction “hotline” will also be available. Michael McBride also pointed out that the MBTA and project team are working with Tufts University to coordinate the logistics of other projects under construction by the institution.

– CITY OF MEDFORD COMMENTS

Cassandra Koutalidis, Director of the Medford Department of Public Works, stated that the Mayor of Medford met with Governor Patrick and discussed the state’s commitment to the project. Ms. Koutalidis indicated that the Mayor strongly supports the Phase I bridge improvements and flood control work, but also believes that the process associated with getting community input on the retaining walls and noise barriers, along with easement ownership will need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

– COMMUNITY QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Q: How will the existing bridge tracks be stabilized? **A:** Mr. McBride responded that earth support will be installed to create stabilization.

Q: What is the current funding status of Phase I? **A:** Mary Ainsley responded that Phase I will be fully funded by the state, and is included in the Fiscal Year 2013 Capital Plan.

Q: How will pedestrian access be handled during the Harvard Street Bridge construction? **A:** Michael McBride responded that pedestrians will be accommodated with the availability of sidewalks on one side of the bridge, along with temporary pedestrian crossings.

Q: How long will it take to demolish 21 Water Street, what is the plan to alleviate impacts of demolition, are there any other environmental hazards, and what are the long-term plans for the site? **A:** Michael McBride responded that the building will come down in a three-four month time frame, and the demolition crew will separate out all materials before hauling away. He indicated that the contract will include ongoing dust control, and with the exception of “asbestos bound” window caulking, there are no other environmental problems. Mr. McBride stated that once the building comes down, the site will be an interim use for replacement parking or a staging area for Lechmere Station and viaduct construction.

Q: Is this the first real Green Line construction, and are these two bridges the easiest? **A:** Michael McBride responded yes and further indicated that these two bridges are easier than the others because they have less utilities in place that can complicate the work.

Q: Will there be more road closings with future work on other Green Line bridges? **A:** Michael McBride responded yes, since this work will involve more utilities and other complex work, the utilities will have to be moved to get the bridge work done.

Q: Is it possible to install fewer tracks at the Medford Street Bridge? Michael McBride responded that it is not possible to have less than 5 tracks (2 for the Green Line; 2 for the commuter rail, and one for maintenance). **A:** Mr. McBride emphasized that the MBTA and project team have studied options for less track, but were not successful in coming up with any alternatives. Mr. McBride stated that the MBTA and project team have studied options for less than five tracks through this area, but were not successful in coming up with any alternatives. {Post Meeting Clarification: The Commuter Rail maintenance track starts closer to Red Bridge and this bridge will need to carry just 4 tracks: 2 Green Line and 2 Commuter Rail}

Q: Please explain the larger problems that remain with the Harvard Street Bridge. **A:** Michael McBride indicated that the project team studies storm drain calculations and are confident that the newly-installed pipe will not alleviate all of the flooding. He indicated that the MBTA and project team have talked with the City of Medford about getting the flooding under control by intercepting the water before it gets under the bridge by storing the water under Boston Avenue in the long-term, and potentially with the use of stone columns. He indicated that once the Phase I Improvements are completed, the City of Medford can monitor the problem and ultimately make a long-term decision.

Q: A resident thanked the MBTA and project team for their diligent work and suggested careful coordination of Green Line public meetings with MBTA Fare Increase Meetings so there are no conflicts. Additionally, the individual pointed out the importance of residents having opportunities to raise any construction-related complaints with a person, not a phone line. **A:** Michael McBride reiterated that the project team is beginning to meet with some abutters and identified Pete Matson as the point person in the field.