

Memo

Contract No. E22PS02
Task No.: 11.2

Date: June 22, 2011
To: Mary Ainsley – Director of Design and Construction
From: Karen Arpino-Shaffer – Deputy Program Manager
Beverly Johnson – Public Involvement Consultant
Subject: Gilman Square Station Workshop – Somerville High School Cafeteria – June 15, 2011
cc:

LOCATION/DATE OF MEETINGS:

Somerville High School Cafeteria, 81 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA June 15, 2011, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: See attached attendance list sheet.

PROJECT TEAM: Mary Ainsley – MBTA; Karen DeSpirito – MBTA; Margaret Lackner – MBTA; Michael McBride – HDR/Gilbane; Karen Arpino-Shaffer – HDR/Gilbane; Bob Cone - HDR/Gilbane; Gloria Son – HDR/Gilbane; Michael Izzo – HDR/Gilbane; Vanessa White – HDR/Gilbane; Melissa Farrell – HDR/Gilbane; Beverly Johnson – Bevco Inc.; Deneen Crosby – Crosby Schlessinger Smallridge LLC; Erin Kay – Crosby Schlessinger Smallridge LLC; Josh Burgel – Crosby Schlessinger Smallridge LLC; Scott Bosworth – Fort Hill Infrastructure Services LLC; William Lyons – Fort Hill Infrastructure Services LLC; Jason Ross – Harris Miller Miller & Hanson Inc.; Mike Epp – Kleinfelder/SEA; KyAnn Anderson – Kleinfelder/SEA; Arthur Spruce – Kleinfelder/SEA; Matt Morong – Kleinfelder/SEA and Tom Jin – Kleinfelder/SEA

PURPOSE OF MEETING: A Gilman Square Station Design Workshop Meeting was held with the public, providing them the opportunity to give input on the Gilman Square Station: design; site circulation; traffic impacts; and general urban design context. The goal of the meeting was to hear community concerns and gather feedback to help guide the Design Team on the future station design. The workshops were advertised on the Green Line Extension Project Website; electronic mail blasts; meeting flyers; and press announcements.

The Design Team will incorporate many of the comments received into the architectural design plans and present an update of the new station design to the community in the fall of 2011.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: The MassDOT/MBTA Green Line Extension Project will extend the existing Green Line service from Lechmere Station to the northwest Boston corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford, with an extension of the main line to Medford and a spur line to

June 22, 2011

Gilman Square in Somerville. The project will improve transit service, mobility, and regional access for residents and visitors in Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford.

Bringing light rail service to these densely-populated cities will address longstanding transportation inequities, result in fewer automobiles on local roads, and help to combat greenhouse gas emissions and other components of air pollution. The Green Line Extension will also support municipal plans for local economic growth and provide residents of environmental justice communities with faster rides to jobs, schools, health care, and other destinations.

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW: The station workshop focused on three key areas: (1) Station Design; (2) Urban Design; and, (3) Community Concerns. A summary of comments received by the community, workshop photos, and the attendance register are attached at the end of this memo.

The workshop format included three major segments: (1) Project Overview Presentation; (2) Breakout Groups; and (3) Reconvene Wrap-Up and Next Steps.

1. **Project Overview Presentation** - A Power Point presentation that included: Team Introductions; Green Line Extension Overview; Workshop Goals and Objectives; and Station Presentation. Following the presentation, the meeting attendees were separated into “Breakout Groups.”
2. **Breakout Groups** - Each breakout group had a Design Team moderator, a meeting note scribe, and a technical expert to listen, document, and address concerns raised in the breakout groups. The Design Team technical expert answered design questions and concerns relating to the following subject matters: (1) Station Design; (2) Urban Design; and (3) Community Concerns. At the end of the breakout group session, one group member (Team Captain) was asked to recap the group’s concerns and issues, and all attendees reconvened into the larger group.
3. **Reconvene Into Larger Group, Wrap-Up and Next Steps** - The attendees reconvened and the designated Team Captain shared their group’s thoughts and ideas. A Wrap-Up and Next Steps was presented to the audience.

June 22, 2011



Gilman Square Station Urban Designer, Deneen Crosby does an overview.



Community listens to the urban design ideas in presentation.

June 22, 2011



Community members share thoughts on the Gilman Square Station.



William Lyons of Fort Hill response to community questions.

June 22, 2011

SPREADSHEET OF COMMUNITY CONCERNS/ISSUES (see attached)

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION
COMMUNITY COMMENTS
GILMAN SQUARE STATION DESIGN WORKSHOP**

	A	B	C
1	STATION DESIGN	URBAN DESIGN	COMMUNITY CONCERNS
2	Consider putting an entry at the other side of the tracks.	The Community Path should connect directly to the City Hall/Somerville High School street level. Otherwise, the MBTA risks having much lower ridership than projected.	If the Community Path is not built, the public can use the existing path that runs from City Hall to School Street.
3	Consider putting an entrance from the bridge/community path with a direct connection to the station, so passengers do not have to walk to the other side of the building.	Consider having the Community Path connect at Medford Street and go under Medford Street.	Confirm is there will be a two way from School and Medford Streets.
4	Confirm if there will be a bike park at the station plaza.	Construction of this section of the Community Path should be included in this project.	Confirm if the Community Path is going to connect through and go to Medford.
5	Consider widening the path to the station so there can be bike racks on both sides.	Confirm if Pearl/Medford Streets can be signalized to allow crossing in any direction.	Confirm if the accessibility entrance is at School Street or Medford Street.
6	Confirm if there will be any issues associated with the access road.	Skeptical of the rotary option because it is complex for pedestrians.	Consider creating a Community Path entrance from High Street.
7	Consider making the plaza bigger and moving the community path.	Cars in the rotary will barrel through and create unsafe conditions for pedestrians. Not necessarily opposed, just concerned.	Explore options for the Community Path other than over the hill.
8	Consider using red brick for the station exterior.	Concerned about Option 1 as it relates to the Elm Street/Somerville Avenue connection.	Option 3 will be an incentive for keeping traffic moving.
9	Confirm if the station development will support economic development.	Option 1 takes away too much green space.	Option 3 has stronger direction and people won't have the desire to make traffic worse, but needs more pedestrian space for walking.
10	Confirm if retail space will be in the station.	Option 1 is a good idea because it will allow more control of the intersection.	Explore having a different workout for Option 4.
11	Confirm if the station will be staffed.	Confirm if the Community Path can be extended to City Hall.	Consider having a 3-way intersection at Pearl and Marshall Streets to eliminate the existing blind turn.
12	Confirm if the station will be similar to the Charles Street Station on the Red Line.	Confirm if the only Community Path entrance will be at Somerville High School.	Confirm if a drop-off is included in the plans.
13	Want to applaud the accessibility plans and the proposed glass for security.	Confirm if there is a pedestrian path from the hill.	The proposed drop-off and pick-up will cause more traffic in Gilman Square which is already overly-congested.
14	Confirm what the station will look like on the inside.	Confirm if the existing Somerville paths can be built up.	Confirm if all the traffic scenarios have a traffic light for pedestrians.
15	Confirm where the property line of the station ends.	Concern was expressed about the lack of accessibility from School St.	The proposed roundabout is a concern because if it is not long enough, then cars will be backed up.
16	Explain how cars will be able to pick up passengers in the roundabout.	There is a significant green space opportunity with this station.	Consider combining Options 1&2 for a good solution to the traffic.
17	Confirm if there will be traffic blocks when there are pick ups and drop offs at the station.	Consider creating a left turn at the station drop-off.	Consider adding a turning lane and a changing lane.
18	Create a direct connection to the Community Path in line with the station, and add gates/turnstiles inside the station closer to the Community Path side.	The mini-roundabout gives "stature" to Pearl Street.	Safe pedestrian crossings must be a priority.
19	Factor the adjacent Artist's lofts into the overall station design.	Too many islands will compromise pedestrian safety because they will have to look in so many different directions.	Confirm if the bus routes will change when the station is extended.
20	Don't worry about matching the façade of the station with existing buildings (it would be too much brick if the station matches existing architecture.	Pearl Street needs a crosswalk at the stairwell because pedestrians will cross there.	
21			

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION
COMMUNITY COMMENTS
GILMAN SQUARE STATION DESIGN WORKSHOP**

	A	B	C
	STATION DESIGN	URBAN DESIGN	COMMUNITY CONCERNS
22			
23	Consider not making the scale of the pilasters too big.	Confirm if there is any scenario where there is not a large drop-off plan. Something that encourages more walking and less traffic.	
24	Explore creating an entrance from the neighborhood side.	An effective traffic management plan needs to be in effect from day one.	
25	Explore moving the bridge to come in at the upper-level plaza.	Confirm if the bus stops will remain, and how bus traffic will factor into the station.	
26	Confirm the parking plan.	Currently, Pearl and Medford streets isn't really a square. It is suggested that you create a different traffic path with a roundabout and square combo.	
27	Confirm how safe bike/pedestrian traffic is factored into the plan.	There is concern about the inclusion of Pearl Street into the traffic plans.	
28	Make sure the design fits the context of the neighborhood.	There is concern about the traffic down Pearl Street and navigating around the High School and City Hall.	
29	Confirm if retail/vendor space will be part of the station.		
30	Explore providing some type of community space inside the station.		

June 22, 2011

ATTENDANCE LIST

John Harding
Ellen Reisner
Joshua Tauber
Margaret Sanfilippo
Ted Bach
Erin Kay
Lisa Gimbel
Phil Brake
Brad Rawson
Ronald Levts
Alice Martin
Kristi Chase
Janet Steins
Jim Witmer
Renee Guo
Denise Provost

Simchu Levental
Jeremy Garezynski
Justin Kearnan
James Madden
Maren Lane
Steven Nutter
Wig Zamore
Amsie Hecht
Bill House
Sean Sullivan
Michael Messing
Charles Button
Randy Meyer
Alan Moore
Connie Brichford
Lydia Lafionats