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# Memo

Contract No. E22PS02  
Task No.: 11.2

**Date:** June 20, 2011  
**To:** Mary Ainsley – Director of Design and Construction  
**From:** Karen Arpino-Shaffer – Deputy Program Manager  
**Subject:** Lowell Street Station Workshop – Somerville High School Cafeteria Held on 06-13-11  
**cc:**

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**LOCATION/DATE OF MEETING:**

Somerville – Somerville High School Cafeteria, 81 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, June 13, 2011, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: See attached attendance 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; Michael Izzo – HDR/Gilbane; Vanessa White – HDR/Gilbane; Melissa Farrell – HDR/Gilbane; Gloria Son – HDR/Gilbane; Beverley Johnson – Bevco Inc.; Deneen Crosby – 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 – HMMH; Mike Epp – Kleinfelder/SEA; KyAnn Anderson – Kleinfelder/SEA; Arthur Spruce – Kleinfelder/SEA; Howard Haywood – Kleinfelder/SEA; Tom Jin – Kleinfelder/SEA; Marlina St. Martin – Kleinfelder/SEA; and Matt Morong – Kleinfelder/SEA.

**PURPOSE OF MEETING:** A Lowell Street Station Workshop Meeting was held with the public providing them the opportunity to give input on the Lowell Street station – look, feel and use in-and-around the station site. 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, and by flyers, mailings and press releases.

Moving forward, 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 20, 2011

Union 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 list 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 PowerPoint 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 was asked to recap the groups concerns and issues and all attendees reconvened into the larger group.
- 3) Reconvene into Larger Group, Wrap-up and Next Steps – the attendees reconvened into a larger group and the Team Captain shared their group’s thoughts/ideas. A Wrap-up and Next Steps was presented to the Team.

June 20, 2011



**Community Group listens to Urban Design concepts**



**Community concerns are expressed during design collaborations**

June 20, 2011

June 20, 2011



**Station Design is discussed with station architect, Mike Epp – Kleinfelder/SEA**



**Pointing out concerns on the sketch drawings**

June 20, 2011

**SPREADSHEET OF COMMUNITY CONCERNS/ISSUES (see attached)**

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION  
COMMUNITY COMMENTS  
LOWELL STREET STATION DESIGN WORKSHOP**

|    | A   | B   | C  |
|----|---|---|--|
| 1  | <b>STATION DESIGN</b>   | <b>URBAN DESIGN</b>   | <b>COMMUNITY CONCERNS</b>  |
| 2  | Will the station have a public restroom?  | What is MaxPac?   | Provide three epidemiology studies that are based on the noise regulations being used by the project team, and provide health studies that are being used by those who create the regulations. |
| 3  | How personalized can the stations be?   | How comprehensively is the team analyzing the impact on traffic patterns with additional vehicles and additional parking related to the project?  | How much will homeowners be compensated if their foundations are cracked?  |
| 4  | How much do the community's suggestions really matter?  | Is the team working closely with City officials regarding traffic impacts?  | Will there be any funding for homeowners to replace their windows with reinforced windows?   |
| 5  | Make sure the station fits the character of the neighborhood, (fit into the look and feel).   | Is the team aware that residents in the neighborhood abutting the station are circulating a petition for one-way streets? If successful, the project team will need to re-analyze traffic patterns and the Community Path Design. Agree?  | There is a concern about light refraction into residential windows from the station.   |
| 6  | Integrate public art into the station.  | Create a station that does not constantly have to be designed and will be there for 50 years.   | There are concerns with the profile of the town if the bridge is flattened, since the Maxwell Green buildings could reach upwards of 50 feet tall.   |
| 7  | Is the project team coordinating with the MaxPac Building design, in terms of using similar materials and are you coordinating with them?   | Consider changing the bus routes that will travel down Highland Ave past the station.   | Has the project team looked at the Maxwell Green plan for sound dampening? They plan to include heavy vegetation and other things to eliminate noise and light.                                |
| 8  | There is a concern that the station and MaxPac will have conflicting designs that won't fit into the neighborhood character.  | How will the challenge of accessibility given the hilly terrain around the station be addressed?  | Many trash receptacles will be needed. Please expand into the neighborhood.  |
| 9  | Is the station basically a glass box with a shed? Will the edge of the shed be up along the street?   | The Vernon Street to Lowell Street turn is already a traffic issue in the area, any increase in traffic will make this worse, including bike and foot traffic.  | Clarify the construction sequencing and time line.   |
| 10 | How many streets away will the station be visible along Lowell Street?  | Vernon Street also has a drainage problem that creates a challenge in rainy weather.  | Will the Little Street Bridge be closed completely?  |
| 11 | It was suggested that a Somerville Design Review Committee be established after the second round of workshops when the design plan is more finalized.   | Does the bridge need to be replaced and will the apex of the bridge be moved to the south? Will the move to the south improve the crossing or make it worse?  | What is the outlook for the Community Path?  |
| 12 | Provide examples of other light rail projects with notes on what is considered good about these projects, and what is considered bad. Provide five examples, and provide links to these examples on the website.      | Has the team analyzed how this project will match up with the Maxwell Green ramp that is about to get underway?   | Can the T auction off the station naming to raise funds?   |
| 13 | Station design should compliment the town without being superficial.  | The concerns with the Maxwell Green ramp are: (1) Only one entrance from Lowell Street; (2) There is only one pathway for the neighborhood, but was supposed to be two; and (3) The neighborhood would like a second pathway that would not require crossing over Lowell Street to get there. | Will the project require any zoning changes? The roads are too narrow.   |
| 14 | The actual architecture must compliment the neighborhood.   | Will the catch basins on neighborhood streets (Hinckley & Lewiston) be redesigned to accommodate siting the west bound side tracks closer to neighborhood streets?  | Will there be enough space for cars to drop off?   |
| 15 | Integrate public art, including temporary dance displays/live displays, perhaps dance statues which are more permanent. Include senior citizens in art projects, such as an exhibit of their oral history/recordings. | Please update the aerial photos that are being presented.   | What is the plan for parking in the area?  |
| 16 | Since the corridor used to be industrial, consider incorporating large steel/historic art sculptures.   | Move the kiss and ride location to the opposite side of the station to help reduce traffic.   | Confirm if the kiss/ride will be large enough for cars.  |

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION  
COMMUNITY COMMENTS  
LOWELL STREET STATION DESIGN WORKSHOP**

|    | A   | B  | C  |
|----|---|--|--|
| 17 | STATION DESIGN  | URBAN DESIGN   | COMMUNITY CONCERNS   |
| 18 | The T has recently begun a program to recycle old machinery it does not use anymore as art pieces-good opportunity to use them. | Make the station visible and use highly visible directional signage.                                     | Will the bridge be widened?  |
| 19 | Will a station attendant be provided?   | Analyze foot and bike traffic, both day and night, to increase safety.                                   | Will the drop-off be in one direction? Consider putting it on the other side of the street.                |
| 20 | Will the stairs be wide enough to go in both directions?  | Check city website for quarterly updates about the safety of neighborhoods and traffic.                  | The new train line will make transportation easier and residents are happy this is happening.              |
| 21 | Please consider using tinted glass in the station.  | Can there be a drop-off at Highland ?  | Can the drop-off go in both directions with more crosswalks?   |
| 22 | How many cars are running on the Green Line at this time?   | Consider a crossway from Vernon Street and one on Lowell Street and Woodbine.                            | Can the drop-off be closer to the station?   |
| 23 | Will the station have a roof?   | Will sidewalks be installed on Woodbine as part of station design?                                       | The high point of the bridge is not safe. There is concern about the safety of dropping off on the bridge. |
| 24 | Will the platform have wind breaks and infra-red heat?  | Will the new station bring more people coming to park and ride?  | Where will the bike parking be located?  |
| 25 | Consider making the entire intersection at Magoun Square and Vernon Street a crosswalk.   | How will this station be integrated with the park and ride in Davis Square?                              | Is the Lowell Street Bridge going to be closed again?  |
| 26 | Make the station design modern-maybe brick in the inside.   | How will the conflict between the pedestrian crosswalk, bike parking and the park and ride be addressed? | Clarify how people will access the station from Vernon and Lowell Streets.                                 |
| 27 | Hold a public art contest to determine what art to put in the station.  | Will there be a drop-off at the VNA?   | Make sure the crosswalks are accessible.   |
| 28 | Make sure the turnstiles are located right by the ticket machines.  | There's a large elderly population, the station should be accessible to them.                            | Confirm the connections from the proposed bike path to the station.  |
| 29 | Consider using stained-glass in station design concept.   | More traffic will come from Highland once the station is built.  | Consider having pedestrians go under the bridge on a walk path so they don't have to cross the road.       |
| 30 | Consider using small window panes similar to the old industrial buildings that used to be in the area.                          | Will the ride van pull off from Lowell Street.   | Explore opportunities for pedestrians to cross in different locations.                                     |
| 31 | The plaza idea and kiss and ride are much appreciated.  | What type of lighting plan will be included for safety that won't drive residents crazy?                 | There should be a second back entrance to the station to cross the tracks.                                 |
| 32 | Don't make station design too modern, like Silver Line Stations.  | This project can be done like the I-93 Medford project.  | Consider re-naming the station "Magoun" or "Magoun Square."  |
| 33 |   | Can centralized crossing be added?   | Clarify the design and look of the noise barriers.   |
| 34 |   | Consider raising the crossing near the steep part of the hill to make it safer.                          | Concerned about traffic volume.  |
| 35 |   | Will a covered shelter be provided for passengers waiting for the train?                                 | Clarify changes to bus routes.   |
| 36 |   |  | Clarify the proposed height of the noise walls.  |
| 37 |   |  | Install benches on the plaza.  |
| 38 |   |  | Install a garden at the station that will provide shade.   |
| 39 |   |  | Provide direct access from the bike path to the Community Path.  |



June 20, 2011

## ATTENDANCE LIST

Alan Moore  
Lisa Brikel  
Al Weisz  
Fay Robinson  
Ron Newman  
Karen Molly  
Eamon McGeady  
Taryn Jensen  
Nicole Sammarce  
Dori Hale  
Mary Mangan  
Lynda Banzi Sponholtz  
Chris Mauro  
Robyn Keske  
Brandi Groft  
T. Andrew Hinterman  
Joel Bennett  
Kathleen Ziegenfuss  
Heather Roscue

Steve Taylor  
Ellen Reisner  
Barbara Steiner  
Joe Lynch  
Theresa Czarcinski  
Patricia Davis  
Ledia Lafionatis  
Britt LaFlamme  
Jennifer Weiss  
Denise Provost  
Wig Zamore  
Sean Sullivan  
David S. Manis  
Bill Dearing  
Gwen Wilcox  
Kristi Chase  
Paul Morgan  
Matthew Hemberger  
Brad Rawson