

Memo

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Task No.: 11.2

Date: April 2, 2012
To: Mary Ainsley – Director of Design and Construction
From: Karen Arpino-Shaffer – Deputy Program Manager/Gilbane
Beverly Johnson – Public Involvement Consultant/Bevco
Subject: Ball Square and College Avenue Station Design Meeting – March 21, 2012

LOCATION/DATE OF MEETINGS: Medford City Hall – City Council Chambers, Medford, MA
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Mary Ainsley – Senior Director of Design and Construction, Green Line Extension
Margaret Lackner – Director of Design
Jeff Sarin – Project Manager, Green Line Extension

HDR/Gilbane Project Team

Michael McBride – Program Manager
Karen Arpino-Shaffer – Deputy Program Manager
Robert Cone – Manager of Design
Michael Epp – Kleinfelder/SEA
KyAnn Anderson – Kleinfelder/SEA
Beverly Johnson – Bevco
Deneen Crosby – CSS
Josh Burgel – CSS
Maren Lane – CSS
William Lyons – Fort Hill
Vanessa White – Bryant Engineers

Agency/Elected Officials

Representative Carl Sciortino
Clodagh Stoker-Long – City of Medford
Lauren DiLorenzo – City of Medford
Karen Rose – City of Medford
Brad Rawson – City of Somerville

Media Representatives

Francisco White – The Somerville News

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Other Attendees

Dan Hurley-Resident
Kate Latimer-Resident
J. Savias-Resident
Fred Laskey-Resident
Doug Carr-MGNA
Ed Carrug-Resident
Robert Sullivan-Resident
Bill Dearing-Resident
Brandon Wilson-Resident
Mike Korcyaski-Resident
Scott Cytacki-Resident
Lee Auspitz-Resident
Wig Zamore-Resident
John Gonzalez-DHK Architects
Kerry Grenman-Resident
Anthony Gilrechio-Resident
Pat Cornelison-University Place Condos
Jessica Kidd-Design Working Group
Patricia Garrity-Resident
Karen Molloy-STEP
Elizabeth Bayle-Resident
Andrew Castagnetti-Resident
Judy Weinstock-Resident
Deborah Fennick-Resident
Tim von Aschwep-AECOM
Laurel Siegel-MGNA
Marc Chabot-PEI
Ken Krause-Resident
Leo Saro-Resident
Mike Desrochers-Jacobs
Lismary Rodriguez-GREEN
Laurel Ruma-Resident
Mary Mangan-Resident
Nathan Kidd-Resident
Jim Morse-Resident
Jeanice Sherman-DHK Architects
Laura Sujan-Patrick Engineers
Caroline Downing-AECOM
Terry Rookard-AECOM
Bryan Hurley-Resident
Frank Astone-Jacobs
Barbara Rubel-Tufts University
Richard Garvis-Resident
Henry King-Resident
Ada Alfonso-Havana-MAC
Everett Moreira-Havana-MAC
Danielle DeCharles-Fennick McCredy Architects
Patrick Canny-Resident
C. Hieolson-Resident

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John Elliott-Resident
Kristine Gorman-STV Inc.
Ellin Reisner-STEP
David Johnson-Resident
Andrea DiLorio-Resident
M. Klumpar-Resident
S. Garczynski-Resident
Alex Feldman-Community Path
Bob Walsh-Resident

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Karen Arpino-Shaffer welcomed the attendees and introduced representatives of the MBTA and the Project Team. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer emphasized that the stations are currently at a 30% level of design and continues to be a work in progress with some outstanding issues that will continue to evolve and be resolved as the design process moves forward. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer also stressed that the community will continue to have opportunities to provide feedback as a part of the design development process.

Karen Arpino-Shaffer stated that approximately 250 residential properties abut the proposed Green Line Extension corridor. She indicated that in an effort to resolve any issues and discuss property impacts and property takings with residential abutters, the MBTA and project team will work closely with each abutter and schedule one-on-one meetings to discuss impacts on residential properties and the neighborhood.

OVERVIEW OF ISSUES RAISED BY THE COMMUNITY AT THE JUNE 9, 2011 BALL SQUARE STATION DESIGN WORKSHOP AND PROJECT TEAM RESPONSE

Karen Arpino-Shaffer provided an overview of the community issues and ideas raised at the June 9, 2011 Ball Square Station Design Workshop. She presented the station community plans and Community Path design that were discussed at the June 9th Workshop and indicated that design plan updates will be provided during tonight's presentation. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer also pointed out that all of the community issues and ideas for each station design workshop were summarized in a "Community Issues" Matrix and are being posted on the project web site.

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer stated that key community themes at the June 9th workshop focused on the following issues:

- Station Design
- Neighborhood Context
- Community connections and pedestrian safety, and
- Area Traffic

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer indicated that the MBTA and project team continue to explore the best solutions to these issues and has developed the following preliminary responses to community issues and ideas:

Neighborhood Context and Station Design – These issues are being addressed and will be presented at tonight's meeting.

Community Connections and Pedestrian and Area Safety – This is still a work in progress and the team is developing responsive solutions including: (a) Kiss and Ride; (b) Drop-Off/Pick-Up; and various methods of increasing pedestrian visibility to enhance safety.

BALL SQUARE STATION SITE DESIGN PLAN

Josh Burgel of CSS presented the Ball Square Site Design Plan. He indicated that the goal of the MBTA and project team is to make the station a community-gathering spot. In order to establish neighborhood context and station orientation, Mr. Burgel presented a “Neighborhood Access Diagram” that was shared with the community at the June 7, 2011 Station Design Workshop.

Mr. Burgel highlighted the key intersecting streets and areas, in the Neighborhood Access Diagram, including the Broadway tracks, Powder House Square, the Winchester Avenue neighborhood the Boston Avenue neighborhood, Harvard Street, and the Somerville DPW area. Mr. Burgel also presented existing conditions photos of the Broadway Bridge, and pedestrian islands.

Josh Burgel presented the following key elements of the station site design plan:

- Boston Avenue pedestrian crosswalk which is the only accessible route from this neighborhood with an exclusive pedestrian signal.
- Extended curb at Boston Avenue to increase pedestrian visibility.
- Extended curb at Ball Square and increased size of traffic island to protect pedestrians.
- The steep slope from Boston Avenue has been made accessible at the ‘Kiss & Ride’.
- Pedestrian access to station upper plaza from Winchester Avenue to Broadway and over the bridge.
- Elevator at upper plaza to provide the disabled direct access to Ball Square proper via the lower plaza.
- Bike lanes on the bridge and covered bike storage at the station.
- Placeholder for traction power substation that will be designed.
- Directional paving aligned with Broadway and benches, plantings, and a shade garden to create a gathering place at the upper and lower entrances; and use special lighting to create more visual interest at the station.
- Continue to explore how to address community concerns about station public art depicting a “ball and square.”
- Mr. Burgel also presented station perspectives stressing that the team is still working to address the community’s concerns about the need for pedestrian crosswalks along Broadway.
- Josh Burgel also presented a rendering of a detailed site plan that depicts all of the proposed improvements. He emphasized that the goal is to make the station a destination with plaza areas at the upper and lower entrances.

BALL SQUARE STATION DESIGN CONCEPTS

Michael Epp presented the station site plan to highlight accessibility points. He pointed out that any area with more than a five percent slope such as the Broadway Bridge approaches is considered inaccessible for those with mobility impairments and those who are temporarily incapacitated. Mr. Epp also stressed that due to the steep grade change between the upper and lower plazas, the team created an accessibility solution with two redundant elevators in the station. Michael Epp emphasized that the interior lower plaza plan provides escalators and stairs for those who are not physically impaired, and at the bridge level, passengers can take the elevator or escalators/stairs to the automatic fare collection area at the lower level. Mr. Epp also stressed that all fare collection turnstiles will be accessible.

Mr. Epp presented station elevation plans and a “bird’s eye” view indicating that in developing the station design the team sought to follow the community’s idea that the station design should be edgy, iconic and connected to the neighborhood. Mike Epp indicated that the Broadway Bridge is a barrier that makes it difficult to connect the station to the neighborhood, and the team will continue to explore design solutions. He indicated that the head house and station interior will be consistent with the character of the neighborhood, but the fare collection and platform area will be more generic in character with existing MBTA stations.

Mr. Epp presented the station head house perspectives, stressing that the design will be consistent in character with retail across the street and the medical center across the bridge. He also pointed out that the way finding signs will be very simple and that at the upper plaza level, a very durable zinc material will be used on the roof, with a granite exterior skin. At the lower plaza, glass-front windows will be used to showcase the shade garden and increase public safety both in and outside the station.

OVERVIEW OF ISSUES RAISED BY THE COMMUNITY AT THE JUNE 7, 2011 COLLEGE AVENUE STATION DESIGN WORKSHOP AND THE PROJECT TEAM RESPONSE

Karen Arpino-Shaffer highlighted key community issues raised at the June 2011 Station Design Workshop and the project team’s response as follows:

Station Entrance and Orientation – The issue of locating the platforms on the South side of the bridge to avoid having the platforms behind the Burget Ave neighborhood was explored but the MBTA and project team determined it was not a workable solution and that the current station location is the optimum solution. Additionally, the earlier track configuration that was presented at the June 2011 workshop would have spread the tracks too far into the bridge and residential areas which would have required re-building the bridge while also creating major noise/vibration impacts, historic impacts and property takings. The current plan does not involve any property takings and the team used a hybrid approach to minimize overall impacts. The MBTA and team are sensitive to the community’s need to provide input and get up-to-date information regarding property acquisitions and impacts. These concerns will be addressed in smaller one-on-one meetings with residential abutters.

Area Traffic Concerns and Right-Hand Turn Lane – The Green Line Extension Environmental Assessment (EA) requires the right-turn lane and the project team further evaluated the issue and confirmed that it is necessary to install the right-turn lane to keep more traffic away from the station while also enhancing pedestrian safety. Additionally, the MBTA and project team have worked to ensure that the current station

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plan creates more pedestrian circulation space with the installation of wide sidewalks and the identification of a solution that will reduce the steep sidewalk slope. The MBTA and project team will continue to explore how to improve the aesthetic appearance of the utility pipe so that it will be an enhancement to the community.

Impacts to Residential Neighborhoods – At the June 2011 Station Design Workshop, residents of the Burget Avenue neighborhood stressed their need for a direct connection to the station. The MBTA and project team responded to this concern by working with Tufts University to design a Burget Path connection to the station. All potential impacts of the Burget Path on private homes will be discussed with abutters in smaller meetings. In an effort to enhance these upcoming discussions, the project team has started creating computerized 3D models for the entire Green Line corridor to show what the station will look like at each home on every level in both winter and summer. To address community concerns about property takings, the MBTA and project team are working to minimize any impact of noise and retaining walls on residential properties and green space. Even though some landscaping will have to be removed from residential yards during construction of the noise and retaining walls, the yards will be replaced once construction is completed. The residential homes abutting the platform area of the station will have a limited view of the station.

COLLEGE AVENUE STATION SITE DESIGN PLAN

Josh Burgel provided an overview of the Station Context Diagram that was originally presented at the June 7th Station Design Workshop. He stated that the goal is to make better connections between the station and key access streets and neighborhoods. Mr. Burgel highlighted the following connections included in the Station Context Diagram: College Avenue, Boston Avenue, Route 16 Interchange, Burget Avenue neighborhood, Colby Street Access Path, and the Hillside neighborhood.

Mr. Burgel indicated that key site design goals include creating a station site that becomes a great gathering spot for the community with the creation of an inviting plaza that includes specimen trees, the use of directional sidewalk paving to create visual interest, and the exploration of aesthetic solutions that will enhance the appearance of the utility pipe and create interesting design barriers, with ideas ranging from embroidered chain link fencing to solar features, along with special lighting.

Mr. Burgel presented the key elements of the station site design plan as follows and indicated that the MBTA and project team are exploring the City of Medford's request to add one additional raised pedestrian crosswalk:

- Install concurrent pedestrian phasing “walk” cycle with traffic to minimize pedestrian wait time.
- Construct a new right turn lane at the intersection of College Avenue and Boston Avenue and install a raised pedestrian crosswalk to provide a direct and safe connection to the station plaza.
- Design a Burget Avenue Path connection to the station plaza that will run along Tufts University property to the plaza.
- Establish a new tree line along Boston Avenue to replace existing trees that must come down as part of construction.
- Reduce the steep sidewalk slope at the station plaza entrance by cutting into the retaining wall.
- Build the retaining wall.

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- Build a new wider sidewalk that will provide safe pedestrian passage adjacent to the utility pipe.
- Install a stairway at the plaza level to accommodate the significant grade change between the two station levels.
- Provide enclosed bike parking.

COLLEGE AVENUE STATION DESIGN CONCEPTS

Michael Epp provided an overview of key elements of the proposed site plan to highlight the area that will be used as a drop-off/pick-up for “The Ride” and for passengers who are dropped off and picked up. Mr. Epp indicated that this area is 200 feet long and 8 feet wide.

Mr. Epp pointed out that a key community comment at the June 2011 Station Design Workshop was that the station needed to be smaller to fit the character of the neighborhood, but that based on MBTA requirements, certain elements that must be included in the station requires that it bigger. However, Michael Epp stressed that the MBTA and team are working to reduce the massing of the station so that it will fit neighborhood scale and character.

Mr. Epp provided an overview of the station design concepts as follows:

Install a right-hand turn lane to the station to accommodate pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Install two redundant elevators, stairs and escalators in the station interior to create side-by-side accessibility for physically impaired and able-bodied passengers.

Explore the inclusion of public art in the interior lobby space that will create visual impact inside the station and outside the station with the use of large glass windows. Mr. Epp indicated that one type of public art that may be presented for consideration is a “tree of life” that provides silhouettes of key community milestones and history.

Explore the use of copper for the exterior skin that will age into a beautiful patina.

Create large windows that provide significant natural light and that look out on the Burget Avenue Path to enhance public safety, but not intrude on the privacy of residential abutters.

Mr. Epp also presented station elevations and perspectives of the station head house and site.

PROJECT PHASING SCHEDULE

Karen Arpino-Shaffer highlighted the project phasing schedule as follows. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer emphasized that in order to remain on schedule, a significant amount of bridge and commuter rail track work must be completed before construction of the Green Line gets underway.

Phase I (Projected Construction Start: Winter 2012) – The scope of work will include reconstruction of the Medford Street Bridge in Somerville and the Harvard Street Bridge in Medford, along with the demolition of 21 Water Street in Cambridge.

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Phase II – The scope of work includes the construction of Lechmere and Washington Street Stations.

Phase IIA– The scope of work includes the construction of the Union Square Station.

Phase III– The scope of work includes the construction of the MBTA Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility.

Phase IV– The scope of work includes the construction of the remaining stations from Union Square to College Avenue.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR FINAL DESIGN TEAM

Karen Arpino-Shaffer indicated the following public meetings will be scheduled:

Spring 2012-Right-of-Way/Noise/Vibration Public Meeting

Spring 2012-Community Path Follow-Up Workshop

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer also pointed out that the HDR/Gilbane team is only responsible for design up to a 30% level of completion, and that on March 20th the MBTA issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to begin the procurement process to select a final design team that will take the project design to a 100% level of completion. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer also stressed that the HDR/Gilbane team will remain in place going forward providing Construction Oversight and Project Management services on the project. She also emphasized that there will be complete continuity in keeping the community process moving forward.

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

College Avenue Station

Q. There was no key on the station design plans defining the “red line” that is depicted on the plans. Please clarify. **A.** Michael Epp responded that the top of the red line depicts the top of the noise wall. He further explained that residential abutters to the platform area will only see approximately one foot of the top of the platform canopy.

Q. Where do the station tracks actually end? **A.** Robert Cone responded that the Green Line tracks will end before Winthrop Street.

Q. What is the scale of the emergency egress? **A.** Michael Epp responded that the emergency egress is approximately 75 feet long and 35 feet high from the tracks to the roof.

Q. Who will maintain the Burget Path? **A.** Karen Arpino-Shaffer responded that the issue of maintenance is still a work in progress.

Residential abutters remain concerned about the noise impacts of idling trains so please review this matter further. Also, new sidewalks are good, but please consider adding fencing to prevent people from walking on the tracks.

Q. What is the width of the sidewalk adjacent to the utility pipe and why can't the utility pipe be moved? Josh Burgel responded that the sidewalk width is 5 feet. **A.** Mike McBride responded that options for removing the pipe were explored but no effective solution was identified. He indicated that the team is

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exploring using special lighting, holding a public art competition, or ornamental fencing to aesthetically enhance the pipe.

Comment: Scheduling one-on-one meetings with residential property abutters is a good idea since it can lead to minimizing station impacts.

Comment: Three pedestrian crosswalks are not enough to ensure pedestrian safety, please consider adding more.

Q. What is the status of Federal funding for the project? **A.** Karen Arpino-Shaffer responded that the MBTA and project team continue to meet with representatives of the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) twice a month to keep the project in the Federal funding loop. She pointed out that if Federal funding is not available the State is committed to using bonding authority to fund the project. Mary Ainsley added that the next major funding milestone is to get FTA approval to move the project into the Preliminary Engineering (P/E) phase. Ms. Ainsley indicated that this milestone may be achieved at the end of April or the beginning of May, coupled with FTA issuance of the “Finding of No Significant Impact,” (FONSI) in mid-late May. Mary Ainsley indicated that once these milestones are achieved, the Federal NEPA process will be completed. Ms. Ainsley also pointed out that the MBTA continues to move forward aggressively even though the Federal funding approvals are outside their control, with a focus on selecting a Final Design team and getting the necessary approvals to use a “Construction Manager/General Contractor” delivery system for project construction.

Q. Is there a budget for the Ball Square and College Avenue Stations? **A.** Mary Ainsley responded there is a project-wide budget. Robert Cone added that the FTA, in its review, is focused on the costs associated with the entire project, rather than a station-by-station breakdown. Ms. Ainsley made a commitment to provide station budgets to the community.

Q. The station is bold and very impressive. However, the emergency egress will have major impacts on the 3-4 residential properties that abut the station site. Is this issue still open for other solutions? **A.** Mary Ainsley agreed that the emergency egress is a concern. She indicated that the MBTA and project team are currently working with State inspectors who have significant concerns about people crossing the track. Ms. Ainsley indicated that MBTA Green Line Operations staff and the Transit Police will be meeting with her to explore options for cross-track safety that will eliminate the need to add stairs currently required by State inspectors, which will impact residential sight lines. Mary Ainsley stressed that using a cross-track option rather than installing stairs will require a waiver that must be requested at an upcoming public hearing.

Q. In reality, the proposed right-turn lane will likely be used as a drop-off/pick-up area. Also, does the design include a turning radius that is wide enough to accommodate bus traffic during track meets? Also, will this be a right turn on red lane? **A.** William Lyons responded that a right turn on red will not increase the capacity to reduce traffic volume. He indicated that the final decision rests with the City of Medford. Mr. Lyons indicated that the turning radius issue has been addressed and will accommodate any vehicle, including clearance for emergency vehicles to get by idling traffic.

Q. Will the current design for the drop-off/pick-up area accommodate incoming traffic from Route 16? **A.** Bill Lyons responded that any traffic coming from West to East can turn around at the area in front of the Tufts Garage and then enter the drop-off/pick-up area.

Comment: The current plan to provide pedestrian access on Tufts property for the Burget Path will not work and must be further explored.

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Comment: The presentation did not include much information on the Phase I Interim work. Also, it would be more cost efficient if the construction of the Maintenance Facility is funded by State bonds, so that the surplus Maintenance Facility funds can be used to support construction of the Community Path.

Ball Square Station

Comment: The station design is exciting. Since some residential abutter properties will face the rear of the station, neighbors want to see some views from the rear. Also, neighbors are concerned about how much property will be taken. **A.** Karen Arpino-Shaffer responded that the team is preparing a 3-D presentation that will provide a view of what abutters will see at each window in their homes. She also pointed out that the MBTA requires that stations be contained within the right-of-way to minimize property takings.

Q. The response to neighborhood concerns represents very thoughtful solutions. The raised crosswalk at Boston Avenue is a good solution for pedestrian safety, and should be used for all intersections. More detail is needed for the bike lanes on Boston Avenue and the emergency egress is still a concern. **A.** Josh Burgel stressed that the design is still a work in progress. Bill Lyons added that using raised crosswalks at all intersections is cost-prohibitive and would not really add a lot in terms of increased pedestrian safety or traffic calming.

Comment: The MBTA and project team did a great job in addressing community concerns including fully addressing pedestrian crossing issues; making a commitment to meet with abutters about views from the rear of the station; keeping public art on the table; and your commitment to meet with all 250 abutters. The individual also stressed that on previous MBTA projects, two previous methods were used that were very effective in addressing impacts on residential abutters: (a) The MBTA provided funds to residents for mitigation expenses; and (b) The community held MBTA consultants to standards with a 60-day period for mitigation/compensation if issues are not effectively addressed.

Comment: The exclusion of bike storage on the upper level of the Ball Sq station is inefficient.

Comment: The modular station design in the rear should be more consistent with the scale of the head house. Also, the public art concept should fully involve the community since so many artists live in the neighborhood.

Comment: Please consider re-orienting the station to face North Medford Square.