

GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT
PUBLIC MEETING – SUMMARY MINUTES

LOCATION OF MEETING: St. Clement School, 579 Boston Avenue, Medford

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: June 20, 2013; 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

ATTENDANCE: (see Attendance List)

MBTA: Mary Ainsley, Senior Director, MBTA Design and Construction Department; Lydia Rivera; Jeff Savin, MBTA Project Manager

PROJECT TEAM: Karen Arpino-Shaffer, HDR/Gilbane; Michael McBride, HDR/Gilbane; David Farmer, HDR/Gilbane; Joe Sgroi, HDR/Gilbane; Greg Yates, AECOM/HNTB; Caroline Downing, AECOM/HNTB; Elton Elperin, AECOM/HNTB; Deborah Fennick, Fennick McCredie Architecture; Matthew Moron, AECOM/HNTB; Regan Checchio, Regina Villa Associates; Josh Burgel, CSS; Michael Epp, Kleinfelder; Bill Lyons, Fort Hill

AGENCY/ELECTED OFFICIALS: Mayor Michael McGlynn, Medford; Councillor Frederick Dello Russo, Jr., Medford City Council; Lauren DiLorenzo, City of Medford.

PURPOSE/SUBJECT: This meeting is the fifth in a series of five public meetings to provide the Cambridge, Somerville and Medford communities with updates on station designs for the Green Line Extension project. This meeting focused on the College Avenue Station.

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.

PRESENTATION:

GLX Project Update

Karen Arpino-Shaffer, Deputy Program Manager, HDR/Gilbane, opened the meeting and introduced Mayor McGlynn, City of Medford. Mayor McGlynn thanked everyone for attending the meeting and noted the project was still in its early stages. He said it was important that the station show its ties to Tufts, the history of the local community, and be integrated into the neighborhood, including walkways.

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer then provided an update on the design schedule. She noted that the last round of station meetings had been held in February and March of 2012. In the summer of 2012, the project team completed the Advanced Conceptual Design (ACD). In September 2012, AECOM/HNTB received a Notice to Proceed for the Advanced Preliminary Engineering (APE) and Final Engineering on the project. The Project Team completed Value Engineering on

ACD in the fall of 2013. She noted that the APE is scheduled for completion in September 2013.

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer then discussed the Phase 1 work. The MBTA has engaged Barletta Heavy Division to perform the Phase 1 construction. The firm received a Notice to Proceed on January 31, 2013. Construction is anticipated to last until March 2015 (26 months), with demolition of 21 Water Street to occur between April 2013 and August 2013; work on the Medford Street Rail Bridge to occur between March 2013 and March 2014; and work on the Harvard Street Rail Bridge to occur between February 2013 and November 2014.

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer also noted that the MBTA was in the process of selecting a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) for Phases 2-4. The Notice of the Award is expected to be announced this summer.

College Avenue station

Greg Yates, Project Manager for AECOM/HNTB, then provided an update about the design development process. He explained that the project team examined the ACD plan that had been developed by HDR/Gilbane and then moved it through Value Engineering, Design Verification and Design Development. He noted that the Value Engineering process included taking into account community concerns and issues.

For the College Avenue station, he noted that the community was concerned about the station entrances and orientation to surrounding neighborhoods, area traffic concerns and the right turn lane, impacts to residential neighborhoods, station access and connections, the aesthetics of the utility pipe, and landscaping.

Mr. Yates then reviewed the differences between the ACD plan and the current proposed site plan. The overall site plan has only a few changes from the ACD version. First, the MBTA has received a variance to allow passengers to cross Green Line tracks at ground level, and then use a ramp system adjacent to the retaining wall, instead of having an emergency egress tower between the tracks north of the platform.

Mr. Yates noted that the College Avenue Bridge will not need to be rebuilt, but a right-turn lane onto Boston Avenue will be added. This lane will be sited near a large pipe that cannot be relocated. Mr. Yates said the project team is exploring opportunities to treat or wrap the structure that will fit in with the structure and surrounding area.

In response to a question, Mr. Yates also explained that the extent of the track work has been shorted by about 700 feet, reducing noise for residents north of the station. Mr. Yates added that the crossover of tracks will occur south of the platform, rather than north. Mr. Yates also explained that the height of the wall varies along the station.

Elton Elperin, AECOM/HNTB, then gave an update on the station design development. He noted that the planned third-floor penthouse to the station structure has been removed from the design, with the electrical and mechanical systems relocated to a mezzanine level underneath the concourse.

Mr. Elperin also discussed how the headhouse has been reconfigured to allow clear sightlines, and bringing it down to a more neighborly scale. Bicycle parking will consist of 101 spaces (72 enclosed and 29 exterior). This is an increase from the 70 spaces required by the project's commitment in the Environmental Assessment document.

Schedule/Upcoming Meetings

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer noted there would be a meeting on Tuesday, June 25 at 6:00 PM to discuss planned upcoming detour and construction activity for the Medford Street Railroad Bridge. The meeting will be held at La Hacienda restaurant in Somerville. A meeting announcement is posted at www.mass.gov/greenlineextension.

Ms. Arpino-Shaffer also noted that in the fall, there will be a series of smaller neighborhood meetings to discuss noise wall questions. She said there was still time for community input on this process.

DISCUSSION:

An attendee asked if the platform length has changed. Mr. Yates said it had not, but there was an accommodation made for four-car trains in the design. Mary Ainsley, MBTA, said that the team had to make provisions to enable the MBTA to run 4-car trains in the future. As a result, the platform foundations will be built such that the MBTA can easily install pre-cast platforms if and when that occurs.

It was noted that because the College Avenue station is a terminus station, the MBTA will need to place an inspector booth. Laurel Ruma asked if there will be a person staffing the booth and the station. Ms. Ainsley said that decision needs to be addressed with MBTA Operations. Elisabeth Bayle asked if the booth would be removed once the line is extended to Route 16. Ms. Ainsley said it would be.

A participant expressed concern that drivers will attempt to drop off using the right-turn only lane on College Avenue and cars will back up. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said that the sidewalk will be raised to discourage this practice and the roadway is designed to be wide enough for a car to pull around a stopped car.

In response to a question, Josh Burgel, CSS, said the sidewalk was approximately 10 inches high. Some expressed concern that this might be dangerous and suggested a fence instead.

There was some discussion about the need for more pick up and drop off areas because it is a terminus station. An attendee expressed concern that drivers will make U-turns on Boston Avenue after dropping off passenger. She said that station is designed to be a neighborhood station for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus users, not a regional one.

A participant asked if the station would be open 24 hours. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said it would not be and the MBTA stops service around 1:00 AM.

Doug Carr complimented the improvements since the last design, specifically the changes to the emergency egress and the removal of the third floor penthouse. He suggested moving the existing bus stop closer to the station (to Boston Avenue) so passengers will not need to cross three streets to transfer. He also noted that the renderings presented of the station do not include the water pipe and therefore represent a view that will not be available in real life. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said the project team is committed to working with the community to solve the issue of the pipe and it was not left off the visuals deliberately. Mr. Carr asked if the elevators were transparent. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said they were all glass for safety reasons.

An attendee asked how bus operations will be integrated into station planning. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said that the team is meeting with MBTA Bus Operations to discuss the matter

generally. There will be a separate study and public process regarding changes to bus routes, however.

Ms. Ruma, a member of the Design Working Group (DWG), expressed concern that it has been awhile since the group has met. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said the team has been engaging the group at a high level and had included members at an Open House at the project office in the spring. She said that the MBTA had been hosting more community meetings and welcomed the group's participation at these meetings. She noted that the MBTA has been trying to determine the best use of the DWG as the project moves toward final design and construction. Another participant expressed concern at the lack of DWG meetings.

Ms. Ruma asked who would be maintaining the Burget Avenue path. She also asked if it would be extended to Sunset Avenue. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said it would not be extended to Sunset, and said that the maintenance issues were still being worked out.

Ms. Ruma said she was disappointed that the design aesthetics of the station do not fit in with the neighborhood ones. She also requested that the renderings be more accurate and show details like the 10 inch sidewalk and pipe.

Ms. Ruma expressed concern about the use of stone stairs, saying they were not welcoming. She encouraged the team to use more vegetation in the design.

Ms. Ruma asked how wide the path will be. It will be 6 feet wide, not enough room for bicyclists. Ms. Ruma asked how bicyclists would be prevented from using the path and asked if there was another way for them to access the station. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said that the 6 foot width was based on the amount of space available.

A participant asked about the construction schedule. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said the station is scheduled to begin operation in July 2019. Major construction will likely begin in the spring of 2015.

In response to a question on the status of the maintenance and storage facility, Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said there would be a separate meeting on the topic, but the team was not at 60% design on it yet. She indicated that the value engineering had been conducted. Work has also begun regarding property acquisitions and business relocations.

An attendee expressed concern regarding the design of the canopy platforms. Mr. Elperin said that there are many drains and the canopies are design to hold the snow until it melts and drains.

In response to a question about the station name, Ms. Ainsley said that there would be a process to name the stations and "College Avenue" may not be the final name.

A participant asked if the Commuter Rail tracks beyond the station (toward the planned Route 16 station) would be shifted as part of this project. Ms. Arpino-Shaffer said they would not. She added that the team is not going to do anything to preclude the extension of the line to Route 16.

In response to a funding question, Ms. Arpino-Shaffer noted that this project is a legal commitment by the state. It is also officially in the queue as part of the Federal Transit

Green Line Extension Project

Administration (FTA) New Starts process for funding of half of the project cost. The project team has been meeting monthly with FTA. A decision from FTA on New Starts is expected in 2015.

An attendee asked if there will be a traffic signal as part of the right-hand turn lane. Bill Lyons said there will be a signal with a separate pedestrian phase.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM.

GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT

PUBLIC MEETING – ATTENDANCE

Ary Anne Adduci
Susan Altman
Robert Anton
Jeff Arcaro
Steven Azar, City of Somerville
Jen Baily
David Baumgartner
Elisabeth Bayle
John Boll
Ned Coffee
Scott Cytacki
Russ Deason, Trinity Engineering
Audra Dilorio
Rita Donnelly
Meaghan Earner
Jack Eidson
JR Elliott
Bob Fitzpatrick
Raffi Freedman-Gurspan, Office of Rep. Sciortino
Richard Ganf
Dave Garrity
Seth Godcher
Lindsey Gaudet
Jeff Goldsmith
Judy Heaton
Jerry Hershkowitz
Jasmine Hung
David Johnson
Michael Johnston
Henry P. King, Jr.
Ken Krause
Laurie Krieger
Mike Korczynski

Bryce Kulik
Adrienne Landau
Philip Lander
Chris Langdon, Halvorson Design
Ann Laver
Emma Lueken
Peter Maney
Vesna Maneva, Halvorson Design
Bill McGuinness, White Skanska Kiewit
Ken Murphy
Anthony Orecchio
Erin Palber
Luke Preisner
Ken Procal
Ben Refah
Barbara Rubel, Tufts University
Laurel Ruma
Leo Ryan
Jackie Santor
Jim Silva
Janey Tallarida
J. Weinstock
Yee Chan
Kerstin Yocis
Wig Zamore