

**Green Line Extension Project
Design Working Group Meeting**

LOCATION OF MEETING: Tufts University, 51 Winthrop St., Medford, MA

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: August 9, 2010, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

WORKING GROUP ATTENDEES:

Doug Carr
William Deignan, City of Cambridge
Frederick Dello Russo, Medford City Council
Mike Festa, MBTA (Alternate)
Todd Kaplan
Courtney Koslow
Monica Lamboy, City of Somerville
Betsy Larkin
Derek Lombard
James Madden
Jessica Martin
Chris Matthews
Jim McGinnis
Alan Moore
Julia Prange
Ellin Reisner
Barbara Rubel, Tufts University
Laurel Ruma
Jo Seidler
Bette Skandalis
Sean Sullivan
Heather Van Aelst

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

Kate Fichter

MBTA:

Mary Ainsley
Melissa Dullea

PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:

David Boate, VHB
John Burckardt, PB
Regan Checchio, RVA
Nancy Farrell, RVA
Mark Louro, VHB
Charlie Patton, RVA

AGENCY/PUBLIC:

Mary Anne Adduci
Joseph Analetto
Elisabeth Bayle
Michael Bernstein

Pat Clinton
John R. Elliott
Bernard Green
Jean Hannafin
Peter Jehlen
Steve Kaiser
Robert Kangas
Mike Korzynski
Ken Krause
Laurie Krieger
Michael Lambert, City of Somerville (Alternate)
Adrienne Landau
Mary Beth Marciano
Joan Medden
Paul Morrissey
Jim Morse
Steven Nutter
Seth Rau
Carolyn Rosen
Representative Carl Sciortino, Massachusetts House of Representatives
John Shayeb
Sarah Shugars
Anita Suhanin
Steve Taylor
Marguerite Wyatt
Kathleen Ziegenfuss, City of Somerville (Alternate)

HANDOUTS (available at www.mass.gov/greenlineextension):

- Agenda
- Groundrules and Procedures (Draft)
- Co-Chair Role and Responsibilities
- Draft Outline of Station Workshops and Public Meetings on the Maintenance Facility and Community Path
- Station Design Issues raised at Land Use Workshops
- Green Line Extension Station Program (Draft)
- Certificate of the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs on the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR)
- Project Map
- Community Path Map

PURPOSE/SUBJECT: Design Working Group Meeting #1

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 main 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.

Introductions and Groundrules

Kate Fichter, Green Line Extension Project Manager for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), opened the meeting and thanked the Design Working Group (DWG) members, MBTA officials and municipal representatives for attending the meeting. She also thanked Barbara Rubel and Tufts University for the use of the meeting space at 51 Winthrop Street.

Ms. Fichter noted that this was the first meeting of the new DWG advisory body, as well as the first meeting since the Green Line Extension project has entered into the new Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase. She said that MassDOT had received final state-level environmental clearance for the project ten days previously, when the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs issued the Certificate on the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). The Certificate can be found at <https://www.commentmgr.com/Projects/1228/docs/13886feir.pdf>.

Ms. Fichter said the DWG explained that the DWG is comprised of representatives from the three corridor communities and other interests within the corridor. The charge of the DWG is (1) to advise MassDOT on design issues related to the future Green Line Extension stations and other facilities, (2) help plan public design workshops and other events, and (3) be a 'bridge' between MassDOT and the neighborhoods, schools, and businesses in the community. She noted that the DWG meetings are working sessions intended to collect comments and help shape the public involvement process. She noted that the public is welcome to attend the meetings and that there would be a brief public comment period at the end of each meeting.

Ms. Fichter also proposed a driving tour of the corridor for interested DWG members. She said that the group would use an MBTA bus and the tour would take place during the day, but she hoped to schedule it at a convenient time for the members.

Nancy Farrell, Regina Villa Associates, explained that she acts as meeting facilitator and asked the DWG members to introduce themselves (see Attendance). Ms. Fichter observed that although each DWG member may be most interested in/knowledgeable about a specific station area, all members are encouraged to look at the project and system holistically.

Ms. Farrell then reviewed the draft Groundrules and procedures for the DWG, which was sent to members in advance of the meeting. She asked if there were any questions or comments on the document.

Todd Kaplan asked to include language about members keeping their comments brief and deferring to those who hadn't yet commented before speaking again.

Ellin Reisner requested meeting materials be made available in advance of the meetings. Ms. Fichter said she agreed, and the project team planned to distribute materials a week before the meetings and post them on the project website simultaneous with the distribution to members.

Ms. Fichter said that MassDOT would take the lead from the members regarding how formal it would like the governance of the group to be. She noted that the schedule included many public events, and MassDOT is able to remain flexible regarding how often the group wanted to meet.

Monica Lambory, City of Somerville, requested that the term "Citizen Co-Chair" be changed to "Community Co-Chair." Ms. Fichter agreed to the change.

Bette Skandalis suggested adding a provision that the DWG meetings begin and end on time.

Sean Sullivan noted that, as a point of order, DWG members be allowed to make facilitation comments for clarification, as appropriate.

Ms. Farrell asked the DWG members to vote on the Groundrules, incorporating the suggested changes. The Groundrules were adopted by unanimous vote.

Green Line Extension Project Update: Design Status and Schedule

Ms. Fichter said that MassDOT is working with the Federal Transit Administration to file a New Starts application for federal funding of the project. She also noted that a federal environmental review document, which will include a section on Historic Resources, will also be filed in Fall 2010.

Ms. Fichter said that the project has begun PE, which will move the design from the current 10% level to 30%. She said that as part of PE, the project team will be preparing Bid Documents to procure a Design/Build contractor. The project has moved from the phase of deciding the big policy questions related to the Extension into the phase of designing the nuts and bolts of the Extension itself.

Ms. Reisner asked who other than Mike Festa from the MBTA was present at the meeting. Ms. Fichter noted that Mary Ainsley, MBTA Project Manager, and Melissa Dullea were present from the MBTA. Ms. Farrell said that Margaret Lackner, MBTA Design Department, and Gary Talbot, MBTA Department of System-Wide Accessibility, are members of the DWG, but were out of town for this meeting.

Councilor Fred Dello Russo asked how the DWG will be working with the contractor during design and construction. Ms. Fichter said this group or one like it will be the representative body during PE and also final design and construction. Ms. Fichter said that MassDOT would investigate how to involve the DWG in the procurement process for securing the Design/Build contractor.

Ms. Skandalis asked if a detailed construction timeline was available. Ms. Fichter said it is not yet available.

Alan Moore asked if the PE contract had been awarded yet. Ms. Fichter said that an amendment was drafted to the existing VHB contract for PE. That amendment will go before the MBTA board on Wednesday, August 11.¹ Once the contract is finalized, MassDOT will make it available to the public.

¹ A vote on the amendment did not occur at the MBTA Board meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Doug Carr noted that the 30% design level locks the stations into what they will finally be. He added that this next year (moving from 10% to 30% design) is a critical year for the fundamentals of the stations, and big decisions will be made as to how they fit within a neighborhood context. Ms. Fichter added that the Design/Build approach does mean that decisions have to be made now. She also said that the MBTA has operational needs for the stations that will receive priority and will help guide the process.

Outline of Station Design Workshops

Ms. Fichter reviewed the outline of the station design workshop process, a handout that was sent to DWG members prior to the meeting. She noted that two educational public meetings on station requirements are scheduled in the corridor in September, with a second round of workshops (one for each proposed station, as well as for the Community Path) for later in the fall. The Maintenance Facility will be the subject of another public meeting.

Mr. Madden asked what provisions MassDOT makes for language access. Ms. Fichter said the meetings are typically advertised in multiple languages, and MassDOT provides interpreters at meetings upon request.

Mr. Moore said that he felt the format of the May and June land use workshops was too informal and contained too much one-on-one discussion. He suggested a format somewhere in between a traditional public meeting and those workshops. Ms. Fichter said she was open to ideas as to how to accomplish this. Mr. Moore suggested having fewer tables available. Ms. Fichter noted that when the project team had conducted the first set of station workshops, there were complaints about crowding around the tables so the team felt that more tables was better than fewer. Ms. Fichter suggested that the process of documenting all of the discussions on flip charts and then compiling them for public review can help to overcome the problem of too many informal discussions.

Mr. Kaplan suggested using some of the lessons from the of the Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) design process, which was successful.

Ms. Ruma suggested having various levels of participation at the workshops, including areas for individuals new to the project and those who were more familiar with it.

Ms. Reisner said it was important that the diagrams used in the workshops be able to convey the circulation elements visually, in some sort of 3D model. She also noted that access and accessibility are important features of the station designs and should be emphasized. Ms. Fichter agreed, noting that the team intends to show photos of similar, existing stations, such as Savin Hill in the MBTA system. She said that one of the core challenges in the process will be to genuinely solicit public input, but also respect the financial and operational constraints required by the design.

Courtney Koslow said she liked the café-style format used by the City of Somerville in meetings. She also suggested using handheld systems, like those used in the America Speaks process. Ms. Fichter noted that the MAPC MetroFutures process used handhelds, but cautioned that she didn't want to alienate people with too much technology. Ms. Koslow also suggested that the station program include the types of mechanical systems used and green work around the stations.

Mr. Sullivan suggested incorporating good explanations into why certain designs were chosen, in a way that will not stifle feedback.

Mr. Moore advocated having technical staff at each workshop. Ms. Farrell said that was already in the plan, similar to the way the technical staff were available at each table during the land use workshops. Mr. Moore also requested that the DWG have any technical requirements from the MBTA ahead of time. Ms. Fichter noted that the DWG received a handout showing the draft design specifications for the MBTA, not including those relating to safety and security. She suggested breaking down features into wants/needs/wishes categories.

Jim McGinnis suggested posting a draft vision on the website, including common questions and simple dimensional requirements before each station workshop. He added that the workshops will include the newly engaged plus the hundreds who have followed the project for a long time. He said it was crucial to use the workshop time effectively, and the website could be an appropriate forum for sharing information.

Mr. Kaplan said that the lay people of the DWG may not have all the tools to make good judgments and asked MassDOT to provide a forum to learn about good design principles. He suggested a training session on "wayfinding" and on universal design. He said that Mr. Festa and Mr. Talbot would be great resources on the latter. Mr. Festa said that the MBTA was currently developing the wayfind manual that will hopefully be available in 2011. Ms. Fichter also suggested DWG members tour new MBTA stations such as Kenmore, Arlington and some of the Silver Line Phase II ones, like Courthouse.

Monica Lamboy, City of Somerville, said she supported having individual workshops for each station. She also noted that there are a number of stations with topographic constraints that will need some level of 3D rendering. She said that the Ball Square station should be listed as Somerville, as well as Medford, and Lechmere is Cambridge.

Ms. Reisner said the Community Corridor Planning (CCP) report by Groundwork Somerville will soon be available on the STEP website, and also linked to the Green Line website. She noted that, in the report, the principles of good connectivity and convenience were most important to participants. She added that these principles do not need fancy designs.

Ms. Ruma asked if a website could be set up where DWG members could share documents and images. Ms. Fichter said that she imagines those materials will be stored on the Green Line website, so they will be available to the public.

Mr. Moore said it will be important to show the public what the limits of boundaries of the stations are. Ms. Fichter said that one of MassDOT's tasks is to set up logical boundaries that include safe and accessible paths of travel to a station. The boundaries will be different for each station.

Ms. Fichter suggested setting up a subcommittee on Design Principles to guide the work of the DWG. Ms. Koslow asked if Ms. Farrell could send out an email with the meeting notes to facilitate setting up the subcommittees.

Ms. Farrell asked the DWG to send suggestions for locations of the upcoming meetings. Ms. Fichter noted that big rooms are necessary for the workshops.

Chris Matthews noted that this process is complicated, and it is important for the public to hear professional input on themes and how to apply them to the stations. Ms. Fichter said that was a great idea and could be incorporated into the first round of meetings.

Schedule for Design Working Group Meetings

Mr. Sullivan asked how the subcommittees would work and be organized. Ms. Fichter noted that the DWG is subject to the public meeting laws in Massachusetts, and all policy decisions need to be documented. She also noted that the work of the DWG may be subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and that MassDOT wants the DWG process to be open and transparent.

Heather Van Aelst asked if there will be updates to any of the station designs prior to the workshops. Ms. Fichter said there was potential for the Brickbottom/Washington Street design to be altered.

Ms. Reisner noted that the next formal meeting of the DWG will be in January and wondered if most of the work will be done by the subcommittees. Ms. Fichter said that MassDOT was trying to strike the right balance of meetings, noting that there will be many public meetings in the fall where much of the work will be done. Ms. Reisner noted that the MBTA may need to be involved in the work of the subcommittees. Ms. Fichter added that MassDOT also needs to be judicious regarding the use of project staff.

Mr. McGinnis asked if the scope of the DWG included the maintenance facility. Ms. Fichter said that the maintenance facility will be on a different track, involving abutters and other community members. It is not a public facility in the way the stations are.

Public Comment

Ms. Farrell opened the meeting up for public comments, asking members of the public to keep their remarks short and related to the meeting agenda items.

Carolyn Rosen, GLAM, read a comment letter into the record (see Attachment).

Jim Morse requested all meeting participants use the microphone at all times and asked Ms. Fichter to enforce this rule. Ms. Fichter agreed.

Ken Krause asked if the draft MBTA station program was complete, noting requirements included only one bike rack at each station. Ms. Farrell noted that the program was in draft form. Ms. Fichter added that it is a template baseline, and that the number of bike racks and fare gates will be based on projections developed for each station.

Steve Kaiser said that design means many things, and there are some skills that the laypeople on the DWG will bring to the process that engineers cannot. He noted that this input is extremely important, but suggested that the members always start with the consultant plans and then add ideas to them.

Michael Bernstein asked that the materials for the public workshops be available ahead of time, and MassDOT provide a mechanism for the public to ask questions ahead of the

meeting. He said this might better inform the meeting presentations since staff will know what questions to respond to.

Steve Nutter said that access to stations is complicated by the level of design. He said that the stations are civic in nature and need to reflect the aesthetics and architecture of the surrounding neighborhood.

Closing Remarks

Ms. Fichter thanked participants for their comments and said the action items for DWG members were: (1) provide feedback on the workshop format and possible locations; (2) provide MassDOT with any dates to avoid for the upcoming meetings; (3) read the Secretary's Certificate; (4) become familiar with the MBTA system; and, (5) read the meeting minutes and other information posted on the project website.

Ms. Reisner asked if the meeting video, provided by Somerville Community Access Television (SCAT), could be posted on the website. Ms. Fichter said a link to the streaming video can be posted.

Mr. Kaplan offered to organize a workshop on wayfinding and universal design. Ms. Fichter asked that he keep her informed on this.

Green Line Advisory Group for Medford
C/o 25 Bussell Rd.
Medford, Mass. 02155
781-391-8424

August 9, 2010

Ms. Kathryn Fichter
Mass. Dept. of Transportation
Office of Transportation Planning
10 Park Plaza
Room 4150
Boston, Mass. 02116

Dear Ms. Fichter:

This letter is to be considered our public comments on the Station Design Work Group public meeting held on August 9, 2010.

First and foremost, we are asking that all Station Design Work group members file a conflict of interest disclosure with the state Ethics Commission. We have contacted both the Attorney General's office and the Ethics Commission who advise that based upon the charge of this group they fit under the expansive definition of "state employee" under G.L.c. 268. This definition includes appointees whether compensated or uncompensated and whether they work full time or intermittently. We are asking that these disclosures be filed and posted on the Green Line website as part of the transparency of this project. This request is not to say that anyone is or has violated laws. It is to state that the public has a right to disclosure for now and for ten years from now.

Second, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations were ^{put to} change in July 2010 concerning architectural standard. All stations designed within this process must conform to the new ADA regulations. For example, no longer can an architect design only one door as accessible. All doors must be accessible and back door access is not longer considered appropriate.

We remind the members of the Station Design Work group that the ADA is not just an architectural issue. The ADA is a civil rights law that the state and the individuals of this work group must adhere to regarding the democratic principles and values that the ADA enacted into civil rights law on July 26, 1990. These principles are ***to end the isolation of people with disabilities, tear down the walls of discrimination, and build community resources that support independence, empowerment and self-determination.***

Unfortunately, the Mass DOT has not responded appropriately to our Freedom of Information request regarding the affirmative action make up of the Station Design Workgroup in regard to community representation. We are once again asking for the affirmative action break down of this work group and the numbers of those who have self identified as having a disability (no names are required.) This is information the Mass DOT should easily provide since they ask the same of their contractors and vendors who do business with the state.

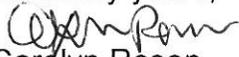
Also under the most recent Open Meeting laws, G.L. C. 30A, Mass DOT is required under law to provide existing minutes be made available to the public within 30 days upon request, whether they have been approved or remain in draft form. GLAM is requesting copies of all minutes to this Station Design Work Group within the ten-day period. We feel this request will not only assist GLAM in its outreach efforts, but also will be helpful to the Station Workshop Group since minutes under the Citizens Advisory Group were often late.

There also has been a recent ruling by the courts that email notices alone regarding meetings notices are not sufficient. Therefore, we are asking that all public meetings concerning this Station Workshop Group and any meeting in which they will be participating such as Workshops should be posted in the local newspapers for full citizen participation.

Last but not least, we believe that mitigation has not been addressed appropriately in the DEIR or FEIR for local abutters and small businesses in a concrete fashion. We understand that this is also the case for the city of Medford's requirements. As stated by a recent academic report by the MIT Sloane School of Management, successful economic growth must come out of humanistic approaches and not from a focus only on brick and mortar (materialistic philosophy).

Therefore this Station Design Work Group has a great responsibility in how it truly addresses the needs of the neighborhoods so that all diverse voices can be heard. Unfortunately, Mass DOT has started the process out without that first democratic step.

Sincerely yours,


Carolyn Rosen
GLAM Chairperson