

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT**  
**May 1, 2018 COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING – SUMMARY MINUTES**

LOCATION OF MEETING: GLX Project Office, 200 Inner Belt Rd, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Somerville, MA 02143

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: May 1, 2018; 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

**ATTENDANCE:**

CWG Members: Michaela Bogosh (Magoun Square), Elliot Bradshaw (Brickbottom), Jennifer Dorsen (Somerville Ball Square), Cortni Desir (City of Somerville), Dylan Manley (East Somerville), Jim McGinnis (Union Square), Justin Moeling (Gilman Square), Brad Rawson (City of Somerville), Laurel Ruma (College Ave), Jim Silva (Medford Ball Square)

MassDOT/MBTA: John Dalton – MBTA GLX Program Manager, Terry McCarthy – MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement

GLX Constructors: Hannah Brockhaus, Thomas Gustafson, Megan Jarrett, Clyde Joseph, Michael Ortler, Jeff Wagner, Michael Weatherred, John West,

GLX Project Team: Randy Henke, Martin Nee, Joe Sgroi

Other Attendees: Matt Hartman (Office of Sen. Jehlen), Polly Pook (Brickbottom), Juan Rave (Brickbottom), Chris Devers (East Somerville), Lynn Weissman (Friends of the Community Path)

**PURPOSE:** The GLX Community Working Group (CWG) was formed to help engage and foster communication with the communities along the GLX corridor by meeting with representative members (both residents and officials) of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford.

**BACKGROUND:** The Green Line Extension (GLX) Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). The project intent is to extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. 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:**

Terry McCarthy, MBTA GLX Deputy Program Manager for Stakeholder Engagement gave an update on the CWG and GLX public outreach efforts

Clyde Joseph, the Project Executive for GLX Constructors (GLX-C), gave an update about the GLX-C schedule and design work including some of the initial viaduct and Community Path renderings. His remarks also referenced ongoing and upcoming field work to include soil borings, utility test pits, pre-construction existing condition surveys, tree clearing, etc. He also gave an update on the project's pest control management and explained how the project is

coordinating with the City of Somerville's data-driven Integrated Pest Management Plan. Brad Rawson of the City of Somerville told the group that the city hired an urban rodentologist, Dr. Corogan, to work with the Commonwealth and the project on a coordinated effort for pest management.

Clyde Joseph explained that there would need to be a complete closure of Washington Street Bridge in Somerville (Targeting: Phase I – Early 2019 to Late 2019; Phase II – Spring 2020 to Fall 2020) as the project replaces the bridge. There would also need to be a complete closure of Broadway Bridge in Ball Square (Targeting Fall 2018 to Fall 2019) as the project replaces the bridge. The project team stressed that anytime schedule information (such as anticipated timeframes for bridge work) is disseminated that members of the CWG (and general public) understand that schedules are subject to change.

Thomas Gustafson, Project Manager for GLX-C's subconsultant, Peer Consulting, talked about how the pre-construction survey process would work with abutters and property owners on the GLC construction corridor.

Michael Weatherred, GLX-C Safety & Security Manager, gave a safety program overview for the project including leading & lagging indicator goals, project onboarding requirements, and what was in store for GLX Safety Week (May 7-11).

#### SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ISSUES:

##### Rodent Control

A member asked who they should have Somerville residents call about rat issues - the city or the project. The City of Somerville said they would prefer they have the resident call 311 so the city can have the data to help them coordinate their rodent control efforts with the project.

##### Bridge Construction

A member raised the concern that Washington Street at the bridge (which will be closed to traffic during construction) already has significant traffic problem and to make sure to communicate well this closure and the alternate routes to the neighborhood. The project said they will plan to have a neighborhood meeting in advance of the closure.

It was asked if the entire Broadway Bridge would be closed to both traffic and pedestrians. The project said that yes it would be.

In response to an inquiry about whether the City of Somerville had opportunities to have changes they had wanted implemented on the Broadway bridge while it was being rebuilt, the city said that they would be making some improvements in conjunction with the project construction at Broadway as well as at Washington St.

There was a question as to whether drainage improvements were being made at the Washington St. Bridge because the area tends to flood. The project said that yes that was part of the plan.

It was noted that the School St. pedestrian bridge would be reopened by the City of Somerville (and the GLX project would be responsible for maintaining it), and a member asked if there was a way to get more light for the bridge as it felt very unsafe. The city and the project said they would look into getting more light and signage posted at the bridge.

### Pre-construction surveys

It was asked if door hangers were the only way the project was informing property owners of the surveys. The project said that they were obligated to make 3 attempts at contacting owners. The first was through the door hangers with contact information and knocking on doors to make appointments. The second was a general mailing o the property owners (not always the same as the property address). The third attempt would be through certified mail.

The MBTA noted that they would also be seeking a release from owners if they did not want their property surveyed so they would make attempts as well after the survey contractor's attempts but if they did not receive any communication back they would send a letter outlining the attempts that were made to communicate.

There was a question as to how many units were being contacted for the surveys. The project said that there were over 2500 units with 400-500 individual owners.

A member was curious if they could get the addresses (without any personal or contact information) of the properties the project wanted to contact to help assist with the effort. The MBTA said they would have to check with the legal department to confirm there are no privacy issues.

The project was asked if it would be documenting where there are no pre-existing structural issues with properties in addition to documenting where problems do exist. The project replied they would be documenting both and that after each pre-construction survey is completed and approved by the MBTA (not right at the time of the survey) the home owner will be provided a copy if they opt in on the survey form.

A member inquired if the survey crews were just two people and would they be identifiable. The project said they would work in pairs and that all would have badges and identifiable clothing and that all would be background checked and well trained.

It was asked if there would be any reason the survey crews would be on the outdoor parts of properties beyond the arranged survey appointment times or without permission. The project responded that they would mostly be surveying outside areas from the rail right of way or from public ways and streets. They said they would be seeking to have permission to enter outdoor portions of properties as part of the survey release forms but that notations about restrictions could be made by owners on the form to let surveyors know what would be appropriate.

A member questioned if outbuildings would be surveyed as well. The project said yes.

### Safety

A member asked how the project defined an "incident" in their safety reporting. The project said they defined an "incident" by the OSHA standard of needing medical treatment greater than basic first aid or if it caused a need for a work stoppage.

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The project noted that during its recent meeting with project corridor first-responders, concerns were raised about navigating and communicating the Broadway Bridge closure. The project assured the group it would be continuing coordination and communication as often as needed and would formally meet with the first-responder group at least once per quarter.

### General Discussion

Jim McGinnis said he could head up the subcommittee group on community event planning. There was interest for GLX to attend tabling events in the community such as Tufts Community Day, Art Beat, Carnival, and the farmers market at Union Square among others. The project said they would be partnering with the city to be at tables at city and community events and were open to planning for others. It was noted that it would be helpful for the project to have a poster board map of the project at such events.

It was also asked if GLX would be at City of Somerville neighborhood ResiStat meetings. The city said it would invite GLX and would coordinate with project concerning appropriate neighborhood meetings. It was also suggested by CWG members that CWG members attend appropriate meetings.

It was noted by the project that the next GLX public meeting was being coordinated with the City of Medford for July (requested dates: 18<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>) at the Medford City Hall chambers. It was requested by members that the project bring the updated project map to this as well.

The project said they were targeting the scheduled July 3<sup>rd</sup> CWG meeting to give an update on the Community Path. Members asked if this date could be changed due to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. The project will look into alternate dates.

Lynne Weisman of the Friends of the Community Path (FCP) said that she would love to see a Community Path public meeting in Somerville and would be interested in having representation on any Community Path subcommittee group for the CWG. She then asked if there are any changes to the Community Path route or structure that could be shared beyond what was in the presentation. The project stated that the path was still very much a work in progress and that it is currently still gathering data that will drive the design.

FCP recommended the project look at some of the path concepts and structures from the losing bid that was still on budget. The project said they have looked at the concepts and will continue to look into them but are contractually committed to the ideas put forward by the winning contractor.

The project was asked if there will be any further opportunity to have input into the design process with alternatives (like on the Community Path). The project explained that with the design/build contracting process, the contractor is to provide a viable design and if it meets all project specifications and codes and provides the right level of connectivity, then the MBTA's position contractually would be that they agree that the contractor had met the condition of their contract. The project advised that a process that provides design alternatives during the design development effort will not be part of the GLX design-build effort.

GLX constructors further explained its approach to the design of the Community Path by saying it first had to establish the alignment of the track (both Green Line and Commuter Rail) and then the positions of the stations are pretty much fixed to their locations. Then the walls to support all this infrastructure must be designed. The path is part of the wall and support design and it is

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being worked on right now. The path must be built within the MBTA right of way as acquiring more property would add cost and time to the project.

It was mentioned that even within the right of way there are different options for the Community Path. The project agreed but explained some of those options may not be viable and noted that design and alignment decisions will be made based on cost and schedule implications.

A member brought up that the previous GLX project included an MOU about unions, jobs and apprentice programs for students. The project stated that the MOU does not apply to the existing project, but GLX-C has its own requirements for workforce planning and agreements with unions on apprenticeship programs. The project said it could work with the CWG to pursue opportunities with local schools and students and is already looking into providing rail safety education to local schools.

A member asked if the lights were fully operational at the new signal near College Ave. The project stated that the lights are now operational.

The subcommittee group on social media suggested the project consider giving a tour of the project along the GLX corridor. They also asked if there could be more photos and project history shared with the group that they could then share with the community. The project explained that news media information needed to be channeled through MassDOT/MBTA communications offices. The project also said they were looking into the possibility of doing a walking tour along the bridges that intersect with the GLX corridor.

A request was made that a future meeting be about ridership information and the models the MBTA uses to gather this data. The project said they could ask MBTA Service Planning to return to a CWG meeting in the future.

It was asked if agendas could be distributed before future CWG meetings. The project said that it is usually their intention to do so and will make every effort to do so in the future.

When asked for further clarification on the Broadway and Washington Street bridge closures the project explained that the Washington St. bridge would be closed for 11 months then open for 4-5 months and then closed for another 4-5 months. It was agreed that significant outreach and neighborhood meetings will be needed for this closure.

Next meeting June 5 at GLX Project Office at 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville.