

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

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

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: November 8, 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  
Michael Lambert, City of Somerville (Alternate)  
Betsy Larkin  
Derek Lombard  
James Madden  
Chris Matthews  
Jim McGinnis  
Alan Moore  
Judy Neufeld  
Julia Prange  
Ellin Reisner  
Barbara Rubel, Tufts University  
Laurel Ruma  
Jo Seidler  
Bette Skandalis  
Sean Sullivan

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:**

Kate Fichter

**MBTA:**

Margaret Lackner

**PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:**

Kristine Wickham, VHB  
Regan Checchio, RVA  
Nancy Farrell, RVA

**AGENCY/PUBLIC:**

Mary Anne Adduci  
Elisabeth Bayle  
James Bennett  
Helen Bragdon  
Bill Bragdon  
Robert Button  
Andrea Diiorio  
Brendan Driscoll  
Marc Ebuna

Mike Festa  
Jim Gallagher  
Lisa Gimbel  
Joe Grafton  
John Harding  
Voury Ignegongba  
Steve Kaiser  
Robert Kangas  
Todd Kaplan  
Mike Korczynski  
Ron Leaks  
Edson Lino  
Steve Morrison  
Paul Morrissey  
Neil Osborne  
Eric Pheifer  
Seth Ray  
John Roland Elliot  
Carolyn Rosen  
Sarah Shugars  
Rachael Stark  
Steve Taylor  
Adam Yanulis  
Wig Zamore

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

- Agenda
- Draft Station Design Principles (11/8/10)
- Draft Proposals for Sustainability and Local Hiring (11/8/10)

PURPOSE/SUBJECT: Design Working Group Meeting #2

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.

SUMMARY:

**Project Update and Election of Community Co-Chair**

Kate Fichter, Project Manager for MassDOT, opened the meeting and asked the Working Group members to introduce themselves (see Attendance).

Ms. Fichter said that the MBTA is currently in the process of seeking a consultant team to perform Preliminary Engineering/Project Management/Construction Management functions for the Green Line Extension Project. She said that interviews will be held in December, and the MBTA will then make a recommendation to the MBTA Board in January of the preferred team.

Ms. Fichter added the current consultant team is working on finalizing the federal Environmental Assessment (EA) document. This document will be presented to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in December. FTA will then be responsible for releasing the document publicly, once FTA staff has completed their review. MassDOT will hold a public hearing in support of the Final EA, once it has been released by FTA.

Nancy Farrell, Regina Villa Associates, reviewed some general meeting and Working Group procedures. She noted that meetings are primarily intended for the Working Group members to discuss the agenda topics, with a period for public comment set aside at the end of each meeting. She noted that the materials from the last two meetings of the Design Principles Subcommittee have been posted to the project website, under *Current Materials*. The Working Group members have also established an electronic discussion group at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GLX\\_DWG](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GLX_DWG) so that all email discussions by members are archived and open to the public. Anyone interested may join the group and read the discussion, but only members of the Design Working Group and GLX project staff can post messages to it. Instructions on how to use the discussion group were included with the meeting agenda (attached to these minutes).

Ms. Farrell announced the next meeting of the Design Principles Subcommittee will be held on November 16 at the Visiting Nurses Association in Somerville. All information about the meeting (including an agenda) will be posted on the project website.

Ms. Farrell said she has received only one nomination for Community Co-Chair of the Working Group. Ellin Reisner was nominated. No other candidates were nominated, and Ms. Reisner was unanimously elected. MassDOT congratulated Ms. Reisner on her election.

### **MBTA Design Palette**

Marggie Lackner, MBTA, presented several of the materials that are part of the MBTA Station Design Palette (see "Draft Green Line Extension Palette for Station," posted on the project website). She brought samples of some of the materials for the members of the Working Group to see and feel. Ms. Lackner discussed three areas typical to MBTA stations: platform (floor, canopy, column, benches, windscreen shelters); lobby (floor, exterior, interior, ceiling, stairs, roof); and plaza. The samples shown included a yellow tactile warning tile; block pavers; part of a window system; and glass.

Chris Matthews asked how the group moves from this overview discussion to specific station-by-station strategy. He asked if members were supposed to consider these choices as a whole versus the needs of individual stations. Ms. Lackner said that she personally likes the idea of a strong concept for the line as a whole, but with individual station identities.

James Madden asked what criteria should be used to pick appropriate materials. He suggested design preferences, cost, and performance as examples. Ms. Lackner said

that some of the materials shown may be more expensive than others, but all are durable and within the guidelines of 35-50 year performance with minimal maintenance, which are the MBTA's goals. She acknowledged that there are tradeoffs associated with all materials and noted there will be ongoing meetings with the MBTA Operations staff to discuss materials issues in more detail.

Ms. Fichter said it was important to start at a high level of discussion in order for MassDOT and the MBTA to gain a sense of community preferences when weighing different design alternatives.

Doug Carr suggested having an elevated, 3D model of each of the stations to really understand how the potential parts and materials could fit together. He also suggested an inventory of how materials are incorporated into existing MBTA stations.

Courtney Koslow suggested developing a document, including pictures, as a tool to capture these options. She offered to post pictures to the discussion group.

Sean Sullivan said it would be helpful to have lists of pros and cons for each of the potential materials.

Laurel Ruma asked how quickly these decisions needed to be made. Ms. Fichter said that the design process will start in the winter and last for 12-15 months.

### **Mystic Valley Parkway Planning Study**

Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), then gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Mystic Valley Parkway Community Visioning Process (see presentation on project website). He explained that MAPC has been hired by MassDOT to perform this study, with four objectives: (1) identify community-wide issues and ideas as they relate a potential future Green Line station at Mystic Valley Parkway; (2) explore the potential impacts of such a station; (3) understand future opportunities of such a station, including transit-oriented and economic development in the area; and, (4) develop recommendations for land use, housing and transportation in the area.

Mr. Bourassa explained that MAPC will be partnering with MassDOT, the MBTA, the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC), the Cities of Medford and Somerville, property owners and abutters, community organizations, business owners, Tufts University, and residents for this work. He outlined the public engagement process with the key objectives noted. He said the process is estimated to take 12 months and hopes to begin with a kickoff meeting in 2010 or early 2011. He anticipates that there will be five public meetings associated with the project.

Ms. Reisner asked where information from this effort will be posted. Mr. Bourassa said it will be posted on the Green Line Extension website along with a link to the MAPC website.

Jim McGinnis asked if examining the potential for a Winthrop Street station was included in the scope. Ms. Fichter that this study will not revisit the previous station analysis, but will look at opportunities and potential concerns about a potential station at Mystic Valley Parkway/Route 16 (including the corridor between College Avenue at Mystic Valley Parkway/Route 16).

Ms. Ruma asked how this study came about. Mr. Bourassa said that MAPC does a lot of work around land use so MassDOT thought it would be the appropriate organization to conduct such a study. Ms. Fichter said MassDOT reached out to MAPC because of its unique role as the regional planning agency and its existing relationships with the Green Line Extension corridor municipalities.

Mr. Carr said he is thrilled that a Mystic Valley Parkway station is on the radar and asked if it was possible the MAPC planning process could 'catch up' with engineering work for the rest of the Extension. Ms. Fichter said that the intention is not for the two efforts to be synchronized, but to explore the issues that were not included as part of the state environmental process for the rest of the Extension. She said the goal was to have better assumptions and a more concentrated focus on the Mystic Valley Parkway area.

A Working Group member asked whether an extension of the Green Line to Mystic Valley Parkway could serve as mitigation for any delays on the rest of the Green Line Extension project. Ms. Fichter explained that the regulation governing the Green Line Extension project requires that 'interim offset' projects be implemented for the intervening period of delays. She said that such projects are generally operational improvements – additional bus routes, etc – and that it was unlikely that such a large and costly piece of new infrastructure would be added to the Green Line Extension project as a temporary offset measure.

Councilor Fred DelloRusso asked if it was possible that at the end of the MAPC study, MassDOT might decide not to ever extend the Green Line to the Mystic Valley Parkway area. Ms. Fichter allowed that such an outcome was conceivable if the results of the MAPC work were overwhelmingly negative, but she hopes the process is a generally positive one.

Ms. Reisner said that most of the discussion about a potential Route16 station has occurred in Medford, with less discussion in Somerville despite a community of Somerville residents within close proximity of the location of a potential station. She said she was pleased to learn that MAPC will be working with both municipalities. She asked if the advocacy community in East Arlington has been engaged. Mr. Bourassa said MAPC has already spoken with a transportation planning group in Arlington over the summer and will continue to do outreach there.

Mr. Matthews said this study looks fantastic and exciting. He asked if it will be replicated for the other stations along the Extension. Mr. Bourassa said not to this level of detail. Ms. Fichter said this work could provide a template for the other municipalities. Mr. Carr said he had seen no evidence that the City of Medford could do this kind of master planning independently, and he was happy that the study was occurring.

### **Design Principles Subcommittee Report**

Ms. Reisner said that the Design Principles Subcommittee had met twice since the last Design Working Group meeting and has been working on developing a draft design principles document (see handouts). She noted that this draft document would be further refined at the meeting on November 16.

Mr. Carr then reviewed the handout, noting that the principles (or objectives) were broken into four categories: (1) connectivity/inter-modal access/neighborhood context; (2) transportation; (3) abutters/neighbors; and, (4) station design/architecture. He said

the abutter/neighbors category, in particular, needs additional detail. He asked how urban design principles are developed by the MBTA. Ms. Lackner said that the new design team, once hired, will be charged with developing an urban design agenda for the Green Line Extension project, with a particular focus on connectivity. She said that it will be important to get the design experts on the team to work with the municipal Master Plans. Mr. Carr said he does not assume there will be a municipal master plan for each station. He said that Medford does not have that capacity to perform such planning, but noted it may be happening in Somerville and Cambridge.

Ms. Reisner said the principles were developed to be general, not station-specific. She said that there will be important design differences at the station level, and some principles may not be applicable to all stations. She added that the Subcommittee has particularly prioritized sufficient bike parking at all stations, as well as general safety.

Alan Moore noted that he had not been able to attend the previous Subcommittee meetings, but wondered if it would be appropriate to include principles and objectives that were beyond the purview of MassDOT and the MBTA (issues that relate to municipal planning). Ms. Reisner said that was a good suggestion.

Todd Kaplan added that the Subcommittee was also planning site visits (2-3 per day) to look at the sites of the proposed stations. He noted the geography and topography at each site is very different.

Jo Seidler said all of these ideas and recommendations were great, but she was wondering if restructuring the document to be more like a 'decision tree' might be helpful. She said in its current form, it may be overwhelming and difficult to see where the priorities lie.

Betsy Larkin suggested including "Comfort" and "Warmth" under Design/Architecture, noting that the new benches at Copley Station are very important. She also noted some repetition in the document regarding traffic and intersections.

Councilor DelloRusso suggested adding a principle that allows historic motifs in the station design. He also emphasized the importance of input from abutters and neighbors in this process. He also requested that the issue of parking be dealt with somewhere.

Ms. Fichter said that she would love to hear public input on this document, adding that there are tradeoffs involved with some of the principles. She used lighting as an example, noting that it is seen as a benefit for safety reasons and a nuisance when it intrudes on homes and property.

Ms. Reisner also added that it was important to have designs that work for 35-50 years, which may incur tradeoffs between the long and short terms.

Ms. Farrell suggested that everyone send her their comments on the draft document by Monday, November 15. She will share the comments via the discussion group in time for the November 16 meeting.

### **Community Comment Period**

Brendan Driscoll, Ball Square business owner, asked when the takings of land will be identified and a dialogue begun with owners. Ms. Fichter said all possible takings are listed in the DEIR and as the design process moves forward, MassDOT and the MBTA are looking to minimize these worst-case scenarios. She said it is likely that the final decisions will be made within the next 12 months, and the MBTA Real Estate Department will begin the discussion with affected property owners.

Elisabeth Bayle asked if all the station materials will be graffiti-proof or be easily cleaned. Ms. Lackner said that all the materials under discussion are durable and impervious. She noted that anti-graffiti paint could also be applied.

Rachel Stark, Arlington, said that she was pleased that MAPC would be reaching out to Arlington residents for the study. She also encouraged the Working Group to make pedestrian access a priority.

Steve Kaiser said the proposed Brickbottom/Washington Street station is the only one on the extension without a set location. He suggested using the principles outlined in the document to guide the evaluation process for the station location. He also said it was important for MAPC to recognize the history in the Mystic Valley Parkway area, referencing a traffic fatality that caused the shift from four lanes to two. He suggested examining a way to better transition from the high speeds of I-93 to the lower speeds of the Parkway.

Ken Krause asked if the MBTA's procurement RFP was available. Ms. Fichter said she needed to check with the MBTA to see if the agency's rules allow it to be shared with the public prior to the formal selection of the new design team.

Carolyn Rosen, GLAM, asked Mike Festa, MBTA, to help better devise a meeting format so that people with hearing impairments could hear the meeting. Ms. Farrell noted that MassDOT always supplies listening devices on request, and none were requested for this meeting. Mr. Festa said he would bring a mobile loop to forthcoming meetings.

Wig Zamore asked if the interim mitigation for the SIP has to be temporary. He suggested it would be worth looking into to see if it could be sustained. Mr. Zamore also said that catchment issues are at the heart of the project, and the stations must serve 15,000 people, not just the parcels of abutters (although they should not be unduly burdened). He suggested the group examine the best practices of all U.S. light rail projects over the last 10 years to see the relationship between land use and transportation.

Ed Salino, Union Square, asked how MassDOT and the MBTA will work with small business owners to provide for mitigation. Ms. Fichter said the impacts will be less than they are for roadwork because the work will primarily be done in the railroad right-of-way. She said the most impact will be the result of bridge reconstruction, which will involve careful staging. She said that the MBTA is committed to maintain small business access during construction.

## Leins Auto Repair Inc.

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November 8, 2010

GLX Design Working Group  
C/o Kate Fichter  
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Boston, MA 02116

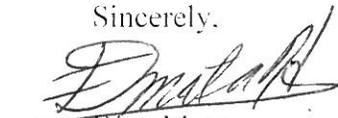
During the recent construction on Somerville Ave., our customers complained about how difficult it was for them to get to us. It's unclear if we lost any new customers because of the area that we're located in, and the excess traffic caused by the construction. We had zero communication or correspondence from the City. We did hear from the construction workers, but only 1 or 2 days in advance, when they would be doing work that impacted us. We did not know who to go to if there were problems.

As a business owner, we'd like to know where to go about issues that come up. Who will we go to address our needs and problems? What is the plan - how are you going to help small businesses if we lose customers because of the construction? When are you going to start thinking about the small businesses, and about the issues that are going to come up for us?

If now is too early to start thinking about the small businesses, when will you? Are we not important enough? Do you care about the concerns of the small businesses? If you are thinking about design, you need to think about who is going to be impacted by it, and we are one of the major groups that will.

We would like to be able to be part of the design, including decisions about how the contractor will correspond with the small businesses.

Sincerely,



Dina Mata