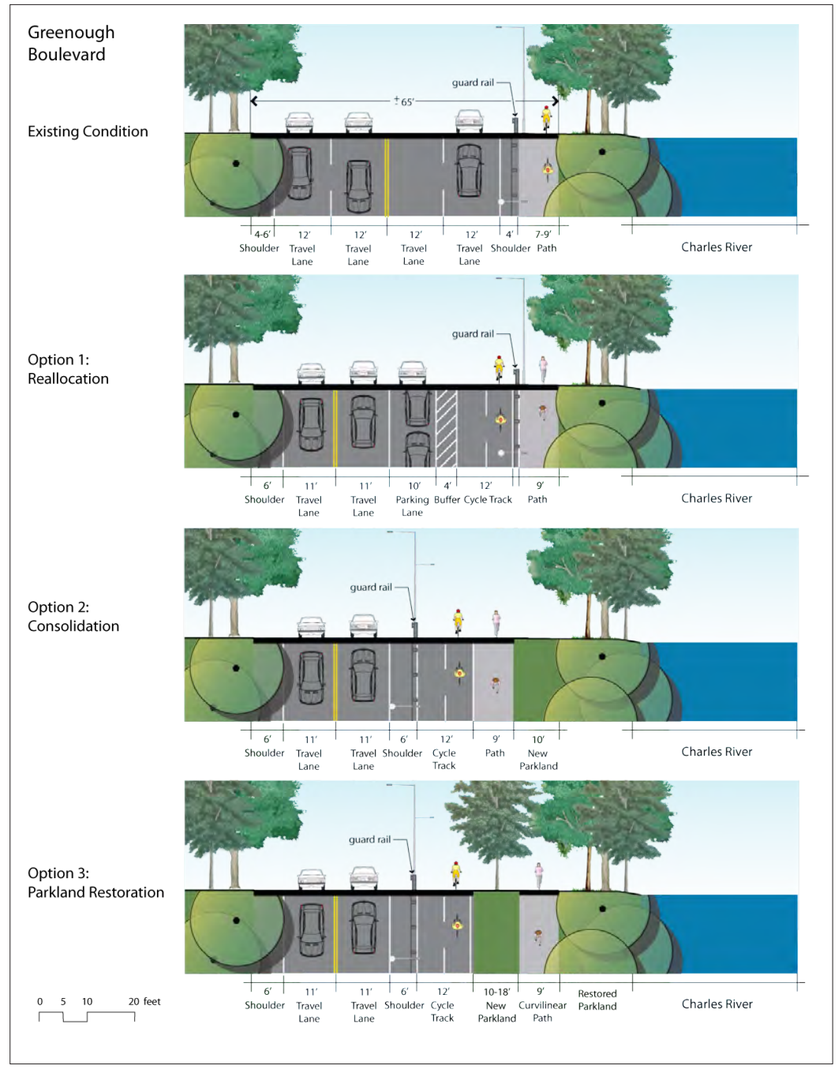
Section C Arsenal Street Bridge to Eliot Bridge

The Charles River Reservation between the Arsenal Street and Eliot Bridges is relatively narrow on the north side, but widens to include Herter Park on the south side. This great riverfront park is difficult to reach from nearby neighborhoods. The concept of the "Herter Loop" includes increasing the parkland between these two bridges, while also improving the neighborhood connections to the loop.

North Bank. On the north side of the river, the GSA property at the northeast corner of Arsenal Street and Greenough Boulevard will be redeveloped by DCR for passive recreation, and the connection across Greenough Boulevard to the reservation should be improved.

Greenough Boulevard is a candidate for road narrowing, and further study will be needed to determine the final design of this roadway. It is recommended that (for at least a portion of the roadway between Arsenal Street and the Eliot Bridge) its width be reduced from four lanes to two. The existing parkland along this stretch is very narrow, and eliminating the two lanes on the south side of Greenough Boulevardwould expand the park land and give more space to the bicyclists and pedestrians who use it.

47. Existing and proposed view of Greenough Boulevard, Option 2. Image credit: David Curran, Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Foundation.



48. Cross-sectional views of the Greenough Boulevard design options [Refer to Figure 50 for the location of this cross-section.

There are several options for the road narrowing on Greenough Boulevard (Figure 47). Option 1 reallocates the existing pavement so that a 12-foot wide two-way cycle track and parking can be added. Option 2 consolidates the existing roadway and path, maximizing the width of the continuous parkland on the south side of the path. Option 3 is similar to option 2, but instead of abutting the roadway, the path through the parkland is curvilinear.

The intersection at the Cambridge end of the Eliot Bridge is extremely difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate. Simplifying the lanes and crossings for this intersection should be considered. Of particular importance is maintaining a safe crossing from the Buckingham Browne & Nichols School to the reservation. Figure 48 shows a conceptual design for reducing lanes and increasing parkland near the Eliot Bridge.

49. The west end of Eliot Bridge showing the reallocation of the inbound half of Greenough Boulevard for pedestrian and bicycle use and two-way traffic on the current outbound half of the pavement. Image courtesy of the Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Foundation.

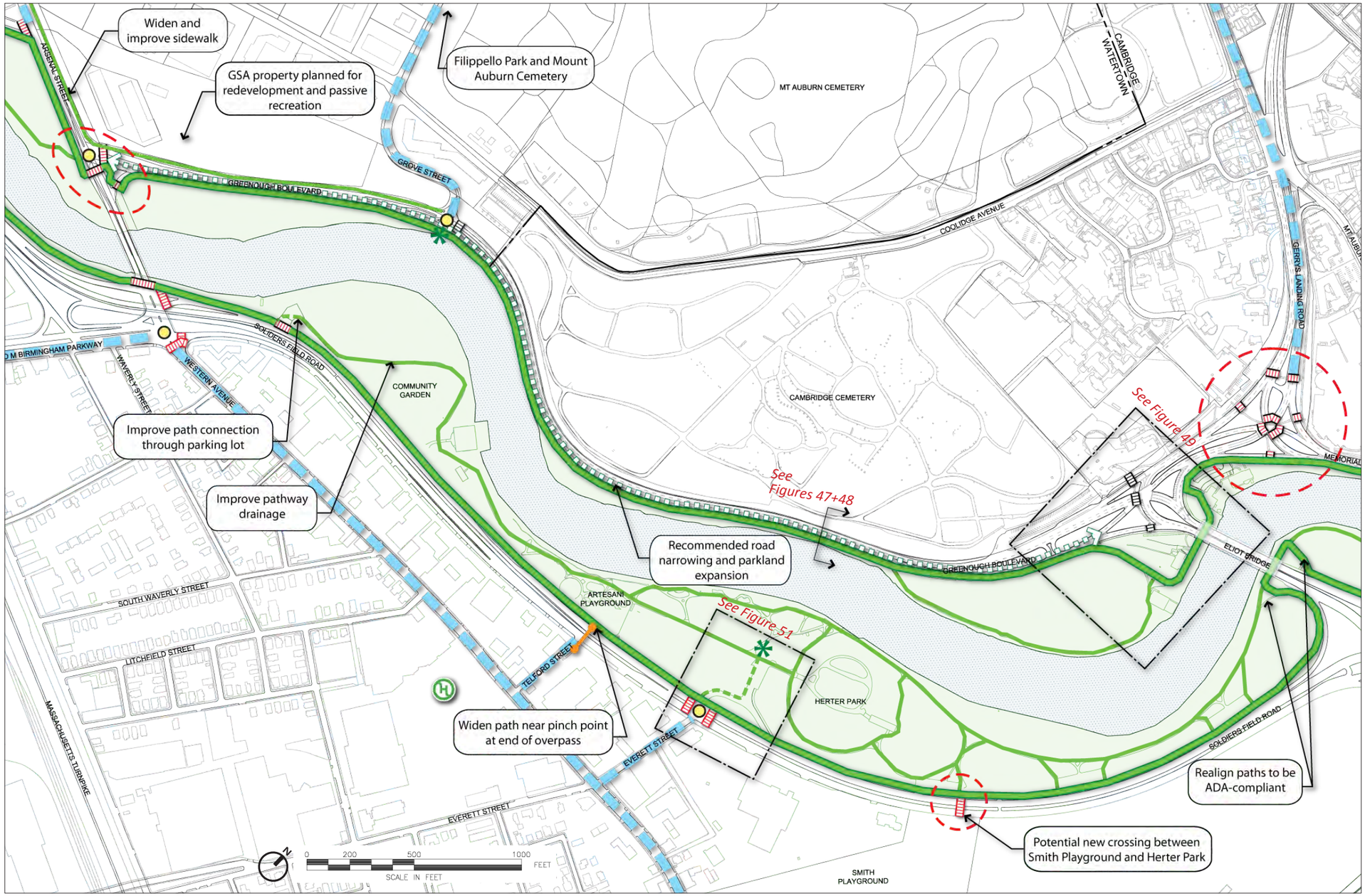
Figure 50

Recommendations

Section C
Arsenal Street Bridge to Eliot Bridge

Legend

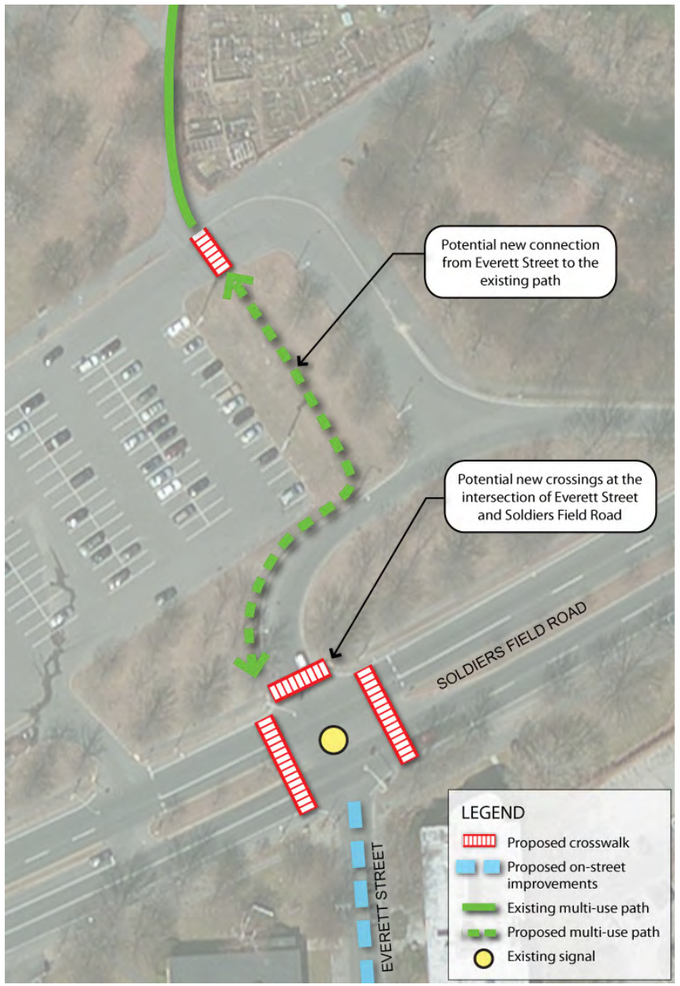
- Existing crosswalk, no improvements needed
- Existing crosswalk, needs improvement
- Proposed crosswalk
- Existing/funded signal
- Proposed signal
- Existing ped bridge/overpass
- Proposed ped bridge/overpass
- Existing Hubway station
- Existing/funded bike lane/cycle track
- Proposed bike lane/cycle track
- Existing/funded multi-use path/sidewalk (primary)
- Existing/funded multi-use path/sidewalk (secondary)
- Proposed multi-use path
- New path/landscaping/reduced lanes
- Proposed bike/ped and street-scape improvements within ROW
- Reconfiguration of intersection recommended
- Entry node to the river with art, seating, lighting, landscape elements and small plaza features



Section C **Arsenal Street Bridge to Eliot Bridge** continued

South Bank. On the Boston side of the river, the path along Soldiers Field Road has been widened from Arsenal Street to Eliot Bridge and serves as a winter bike and pedestrian route. Raised crosswalks will be installed at all the curb cuts are into the parkland in 2013.

A secondary path runs close to the water through Herter Park. The western end of the secondary path ends at a small parking area. Signage and clearer pavement markings can improve this connection. Drainage issues on the secondary path between the community garden and the river need to be addressed.



51. Detailed plan showing improved connections from Everett Street to Herter Park and the river

There are few existing crossings between the Allston neighborhood and the reservation. On-street improvements to Western Avenue, Teleford and Everett Streets are recommended. Everett Street is an excellent potential bicycle and pedestrian connection to the reservation. Although there is a signal at its intersection with Soldiers Field Road, there are no crosswalks or pedestrian signals. These are recommended, as well as the addition of a path or widened sidewalk leading from this intersection into Herter Park (Figure 51).

A future study should determine the feasibility of an additional crossing at the edge of Smith Playground to the reservation. There is currently no crosswalk or signal here, but it is a pedestrian desire line. The study should determine whether signalization of this crossing is appropriate, considering the sight lines, existing and projected gaps in traffic and other factors. The existing median could serve as a refuge island for crossing pedestrians. .

Near the Eliot Bridge underpasses, the primary path splits, with one path continuing along the river under the bridge, and the other path merging with the bridge sidewalk to cross the river. The connections between the sidewalk and the path on the east end of the bridge are steep and should be realigned so they are ADA-compliant. The bridge's sidewalks serve the pedestrian and bike traffic adequately and no changes to the roadway configuration are expected. Non-motorized traffic on the south sidewalk is expected to increase in the future as the Herter Loop is implemented.

Section D **Eliot Bridge to Western Avenue Bridge**

The section of the Charles River Reservation between the Eliot Bridge and the Western Avenue Bridge includes the Anderson Memorial Bridge and the Weeks pedestrian bridges, as well as residential, commercial and institutional density on both sides of the river.

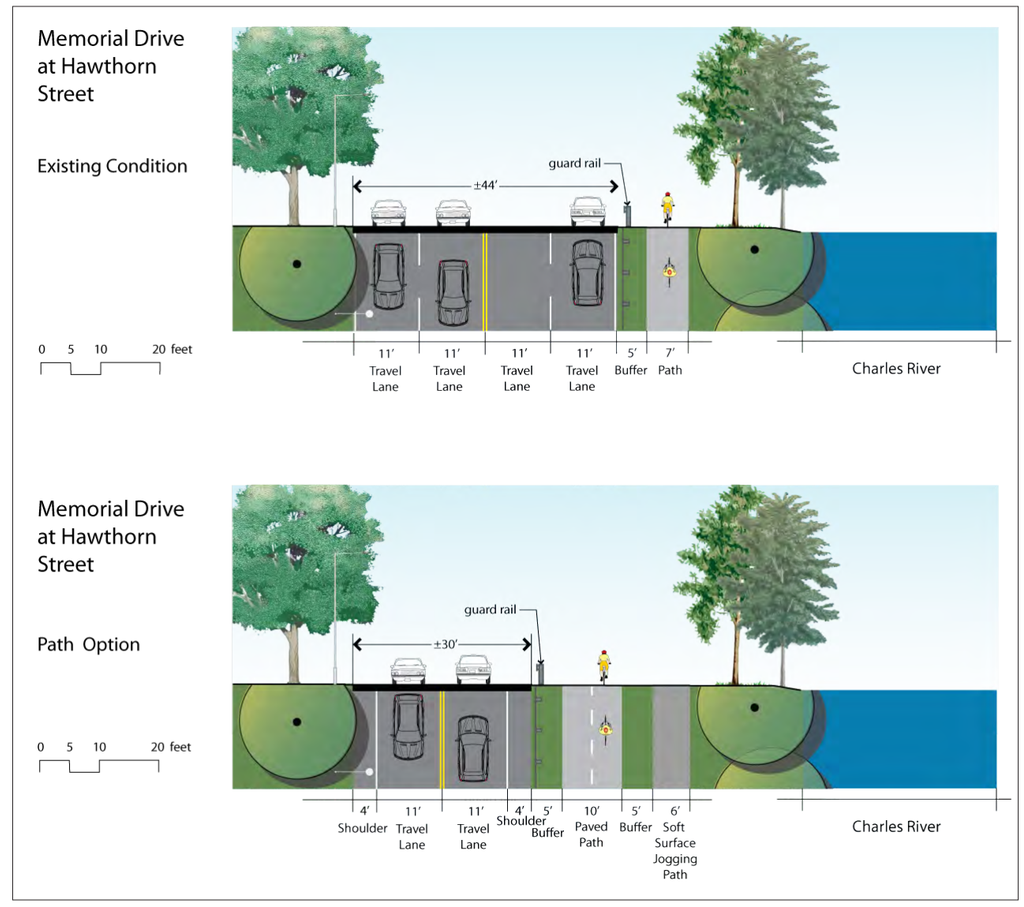
North Bank. On the Cambridge side of the river, some crossing improvements are needed at the intersection of Gerry's Landing Road and Memorial Drive just north of the Eliot Bridge. On-street improvements are also recommended for Gerry's Landing Road to improve the connection to Mount Auburn Cemetery and the adjacent neighborhood.

To expand the narrow strip of parkland and thenarrow path in this section, reducing the width of Memorial Drive between the intersection with Gerry's Landing Road and John F. Kennedy (JFK) Street should be studied. The path in this entire section should be widened at least to 10 feet. Because Sparks Street already has bike lanes, the connection across Memorial Drive to the reservation should be improved with the addition of a crosswalk and a gateway treatment.

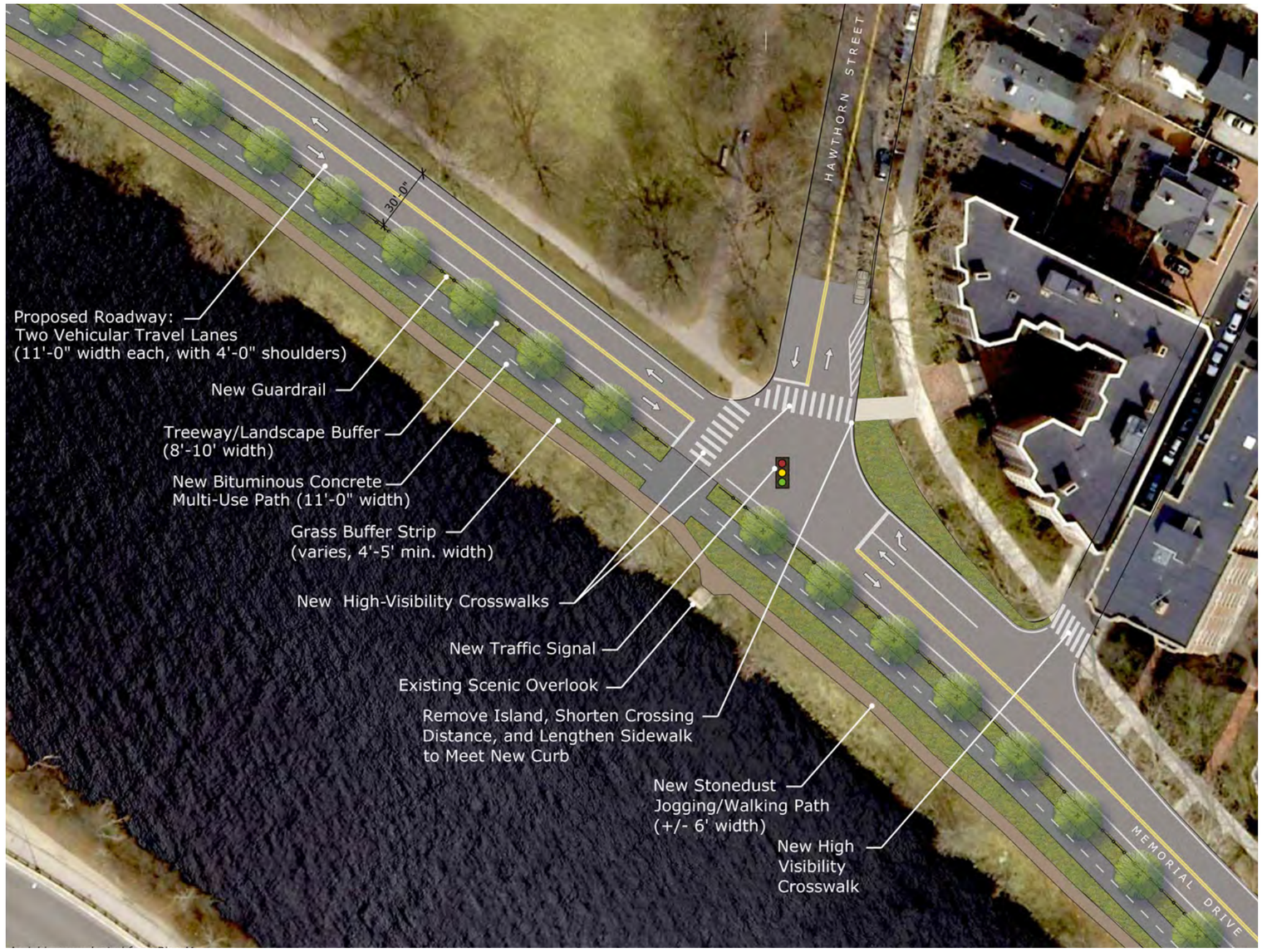
The parkland and the path are both very narrow in this portion of the reservation, so the lanes should be removed from the south side of Memorial Drive, allowing for parkland expansion. To create enough queuing space at the at the JFK Street signal, the lane reduction can end at the west edge of Kennedy Park. Path improvements and an additional crosswalk at this end will help connect the reservation to University Road and Harvard Square.

This proposed road narrowing and parkland expansion creates more space for a stablized riverbank and for the historic London plane trees. A boardwalk should be considered where the desired path width cannot be achieved without compromising riverbank stability. The intersection with Hawthorn Street is in the middle of this proposed road narrowing and parkland expansion. Since there is a bike lane on Hawthorn Street, north of Mount Auburn Street, on-street improvements for cyclists are recommended for the section of Hawthorn between Mount Auburn Street and Memorial Drive. At the

52. Existing and proposed views of road narrowing and expanded parkland near Hawthorn Street in Cambridge



53. Memorial Drive road narrowing.



54. Plan view showing the Memorial Drive lane reduction, expansion of the adjacent parkland and new traffic signal the Memorial Drive/Hawthorn Street intersection.

intersection, a traffic signal or a refuge island is recommended to improve the existing crosswalk (Figure 54).

Further downstream, the planned rehabilitation of Anderson Memorial Bridge includes bike lanes in both directions. These bike lanes should be carried through to the two-way section of JFK Street between Memorial Drive and Eliot Street.

The signalized crossing at Dewolfe Street is an important link between Mount Auburn Street and the reservation, and should be improved with bicycle facilities, which in the longer term could include striped bike lanes, but in the short term shared-lane markings and signage.

There is a dense residential neighborhood adjacent to Memorial Drive between Dewolfe Street and Western Avenue, but there are no crossings between the two intersections for pedestrians, who frequently dash across Memorial Drive here to the path system along the river. The sidewalk on the Cambridge side of Memorial Drive should be widened and improved to encourage joggers and pedestrians to stay o the sidewalk and use the signalized pedestrian crossings.

The intersection of Western Avenue and Memorial Drive is being redesigned as part of the Western Avenue Bridge rehabilitation project by MassDOT. Current plans call for the intersection to include only one outbound lane on Memorial Drive. With this reconfiguration, road narrowing should be considered for a section of Memorial Drive upstream of Western Avenue. This will provide the opportunity to expand the parkland on the river side of Memorial Drive, or to expand the sidewalk on the Cambridge side. The queuing at the JFK Street intersection suggests that the lane reduction may function best between Western Avenue and Dewolfe Street.

South Bank. On the Boston side of the Charles River, the path runs along the edge of Soldiers Field Road from the Eliot Bridge to the Anderson Bridge. Raised or high-visibility crosswalks should be considered at the driveways of Newell Boathouse.

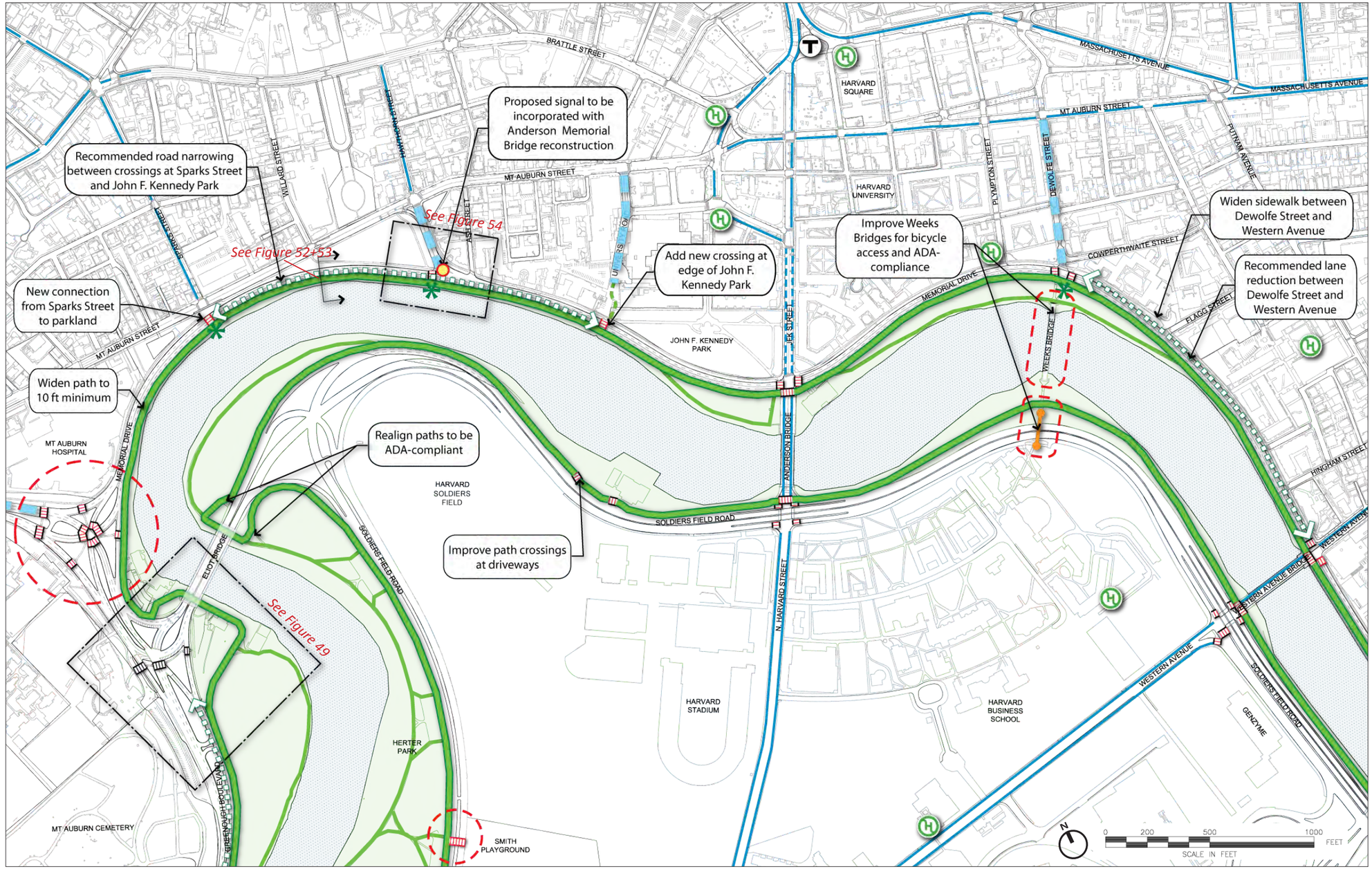
As part of the Anderson Memorial Bridge rehabilitation, removal of the right-turn slip lanes and curb realignments are planned that will reduce the crossing distance for path users on the south end of the bridge.

The John W. Weeks and Sinclair Weeks Bridges are currently accessible only by stairs. In the long term, bicycle accessibility and ADA-compliance should be a goal for this pair of bridges.

Figure 55

Recommendations

Section D
Eliot Bridge to Western Avenue Bridge

Legend

- Existing crosswalk, no improvements needed
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