

Watertown- Cambridge Greenway Project

Public Comments

deadline June 30, 2016

Date and Time	Topic on Which You are Submitting Your Comment	Comment	Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Email	I would like to receive future DCR updates
6/3/2016 17:44	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 2016	<p>Dear DCR,</p> <p>Please accept my appreciation and thanks for all your wonderful work on the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project. The meeting last night in Cambridge was very informative, and I wanted to make sure to add comments of support.</p> <p>The planning and construction of the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway is vital to completing the important regional connection linking the Charles River path system and the Minuteman Bikeway. This will help to enrich all the communities in the area.</p> <p>Thank you very much.</p> <p>Yoichi Udagawa</p>	Yoichi Udagawa	54 Cottage Street Watertown, MA 02472 US	Watertown	MA	02472	udagawa@gmail.com	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/6/2016 11:25	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 2016	<p>Lighting was a major issue for many attendees at the June 2 Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project meeting. I recognize DCR's reluctance to add lighting to the project's scope, but I would like to suggest a possible way forward.</p> <p>I propose that the DCR, as part of the remaining 25% design effort, develop a lighting master plan for the Greenway. I would envision the lighting plan as comprising the following elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inventory existing lighting that will illuminate the Greenway, e.g. street lamps on or near the Huron Ave, Mt. Auburn and Grove Street bridges, various parking lots, etc. I believe a large portion of the path will be found to receive some illumination, especially during the winter when deciduous foliage is not blocking light from abutters and when commuters are more likely to have to ride during darkness. 2. Review proposed plantings so that the combination of existing lighting and plantings, both at partial and full growth, do not create undesirable shadows. 3. Suggest locations and luminosity levels for additional lighting fixtures that could be provided by other stakeholders, such as the two municipalities, abutters (e.g. security lighting), and maybe even volunteers stewards. Some guidance could prevent excessive or counterproductive lighting. 4. Identify any areas where lighting should be discouraged for environmental reasons. 5. While most, if not all, lighting could be provided from sources external to the DCR property, a design effort might reveal some instances where a small added element, such as an empty electrical conduit crossing under the path, might facilitate later installation. <p>The Watertown-Cambridge Greenway is a valuable project and I think the lighting study I suggest would go a long way toward addressing public concerns while not materially adding to the project's cost or timeframe or to DCR's responsibilities. If additional funds are needed for such a study, they could be raised from private donors.</p>	Arnold Reinhold	14 Fresh Pond Place Cambridge, MA 02138-4430 US	Cambridge	MA	02138-4430	agr@me.com	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic

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6/8/2016 12:30	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 2016	We own the building located at 65 Grove Street in Watertown (formerly the GE Ionics building) and would like to locate a gate/opening in the proposed split rail fence that will be installed as part of the bike path so that tenants in our building can connect directly from the property. Thank you, Ed Nardi	ed nardi	Cresset, 120 Water Street Boston, MA 02109 US	Boston	MA	02109	enardi@cressetgroup.com	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/10/2016 12:50	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 2016	The sooner the better is I guess my take-home comment. As you know, these things, i.e., separated bikeways/walkways/jogging lanes/whatever, have a way of building their own momentum and recognition in communities that adopt them. Even turning into destination sites for tourists and other visitors. My own past trips to places like Philadelphia, D.C., and Portland are memorable not only for the museums, architecture, and restaurants, but also the shady, respite pathways that were created in certain neighborhoods decades ago. Given the benefits for locals as well, from toddlers to old-times, it's a win-win-win, no? I'm a Watertown resident now and already use the short path built here a few years ago. Help clean it up, too, when a rep gets together a group. Paul Angiolillo	Paul Angiolillo	28 Commonwealth Rd. #3 Watertown, MA 02472 US	Watertown	MA	02472	pangiolillo@gmail.com	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/14/2016 20:00	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 2016	<p>I attended your June 2nd Public Meeting and it was very useful and informative. I understand that one of the abutters had concerns about encroachment onto the State's property and a survey was done on the abutter's property by the State. I have that concern as well and would like to know if the State can survey my property at 70 Park Avenue to ascertain whether there is an encroachment onto the State's property</p> <p>The house at 70 Park Avenue has been in the Lepera name for over 90 years and addition was put on the back of the house in the early 60's. At some point down the line the property will most likely be sold and it is my concern that part of the addition may be on State property.</p> <p>Is it possible for the State to do a survey and determine whether there is an encroachment and if there is, how can this matter be resolved?</p> <p>Louis J. Lepera</p>	Louis Lepera	48 Cardinal Court Braintree, MA 02184 US	Braintree	MA	12/23/1905 0:00	ljlpera@verizon.net	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/19/2016 12:58	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 2016	<p>I am writing in support of no lighting of the bikeway section through the Fresh Pond Reservation. Lighting would undermine the character of one of the reservation natural areas of which there are a limited number. Dominant uses at the reservation are the golf course and Glacken Field; water treatment plant and extensive lawns of Kingsley Park; Neville and Maher Park; and parking lots. The vision for the remainder, as stated in the master plan, is naturalistic with native vegetation supporting wildlife, soil health, and water quality. Special areas such as Black's Nook and Lusitania Meadow are now in place which support these values and vision. This approach is most distinctive near pathways and enhance the experience of being in an urban oasis for many users in a fast developing urban environment.</p> <p>In implementation of the reservation master plan lighting has been removed where possible. The Dark Sky movement and the Audubon Society both make the case for less night lighting. Bicycle professionals recommend a headlight as most effective. I support the DCR's policy of no lighting on their bikeways. While I understand the overwhelming support for this bikeway connection necessitating intrusion through the reservation I hope the viewpoint of ecological goals, and the sense of place aspired to through implementation of the master plan, will be respected by the City and others seeking lighting as a small concession affecting a short distance.</p> <p>Janet Burns member, Fresh Pond Reservation Master Plan Advisory Board</p>	Janet Burns	57 Frost Street Cambridge, MA 02140 US	Cambridge	MA	11/9/1905 0:00	janetburns57@hotmail.com	

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Date and Time	Topic on Which You are Submitting Your Comment	Comment	Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Email	I would like to receive future DCR updates
6/20/2016 17:05	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	<p>I think it is very important to have this path as wide as possible. I don't agree that it should be the width of Minuteman, as that is not wide enough.</p> <p>Further, given that this is a commuter path and kids and families will be using it to get to schools (several schools near the path), it should be lit all the way along the path.</p> <p>I strongly support this project and appreciate the efforts of the DCR!</p> <p>Amy Flax 86 Normandy Ave Cambridge, MA 02138 Amy_Flax@comcast.net</p>	Amy Flax	86 Normandy Ave Cambridge, MA 02138 US	Cambridge	MA	11/7/1905 0:00	Amy_Flax@comcast.net	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/20/2016 20:09	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	<p>As the Executive Director of the Boston Cyclists Union, and on behalf of our more than 1,000 members and constituents, we are so pleased that the design for this project is almost complete. One detail that we are hearing from the bike community is the desire for lighting on this Greenway. We understand there are limitations to the ability of DCR to light every path, nor is that what we're asking for.</p> <p>This path will be an important regional connector for people who commute in and out of the urban core, using a bike as a means of transportation. The Greenway's connectivity to the Minuteman and Community Paths, Alewife Brook Greenway, and other off-street paths will help thousands of people have a safer and more comfortable route for commuting to work, school and everyday trips. However, not comfortable for everyone without proper lighting. The Community Path in Cambridge and Somerville is lit, as are the Paul Dudley White Path and Southwest Corridor, among others. As a commuter connection, one can easily imagine that this path will be used after dark - this will not merely be a recreational path. While some riders are comfortable without lighting, many are not. If we are thinking about our bike network being planned for more riders of all ages and abilities, women, children, and more elderly path users will likely not feel safe or comfortable on an unlit path. Speaking as a woman who rides year-round in all weather, I will not choose a route that includes an unlit path at night. Additionally, everyone using the path will not be biking, and one cannot expect people walking along the path to bring their own lights. For equitable use, better lighting should be a priority. So should making sure the lighting under the underpasses along the path is adequate.</p> <p>The path is something to be celebrated, but with the investment being put forth it's important to ask. Who do we want to build this for? For the use of some or most people, or all people?</p>	Becca Wolfson	PO Box 301394 Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 US	Jamaica Plain	MA	10/30/1905 0:00	bwolfson@bostoncyclistsunion.org	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/20/2016 20:39	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	<p>This is a fabulous project for both commuters and recreation. It deserves your complete support. To make it most useful for commuters, it would be best if lighting could be added so that in the late fall, winter, and early spring it will be safer for cycling - especially since I believe you plan to plough enough for bike to get by in the winter.</p> <p>Thank you for making this greenway happen!</p> <p>Randy Stern Cambridge</p>	Rabby Stern	12 Kenwood st Cambridge, MA 02139 US	Cambridge	MA	11/8/1905 0:00	stern.cport@gmail.com	
6/20/2016 22:05	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	<p>I strongly support the Greenway and urge you to see the project to completion. This is an important link in a growing network of trails that will enable so many people to travel by bike, both for commuting and for recreation. Lessons learned from other successful paths suggest that an ample width and sufficient lighting are important and should not be neglected in the design.</p>	Sean Peirce	26 Rice St Cambridge, MA 02140 US	Cambridge	MA	11/9/1905 0:00	seanpeirce@hotmail.com	

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6/20/2016 23:31	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	I'm very excited about the Watertown Cambridge Greenway, which will be an important connection between existing bike paths. I think it will be a great resource for the immediate neighborhoods as well. One concern, however, is about the lack of lighting. In both tunnels (under Mt. Auburn st and Huron Ave) lights such as those for the Eliot Bridge underpasses are essential for safety after dark - bike lights illuminate the path but not the area where a mugger could lurk. It will also be important to have some lighting along the rest of the path - dark sky compliant, so not impacting abutters - and I hope an effort will be made to find funding for that (though i realize that might not be possible in the section that passes hrough Fresh Pond Reservation.	andrea Williams	176 Appleton St. Cambridge, MA 02138 US	Cambridge	MA	11/7/1905 0:00	alwcmw@verizon.ne	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/20/2016 23:36	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	One critical issue with this and other new infrastructure projects is how transitions from protected or separated infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians transitions to "non improved" sections. We would want to ensure that consideration is in place for appropriate signage for entrance and exit points, or where infrastructure transitions directly to street level traffic, there is some design to ease transitions and mitigate conflict. Minimizing abrupt transitions will improve cyclist and pedestrian safety.	Anne Biernacki	7 Newport Road, No 8 Cambridge, MA 02140 US	Cambridge	MA	11/9/1905 0:00	ambiernacki@gmail.com	Please add my contact information to an outreach list on the selected topic, in order to receive future DCR updates and public meeting notices on the topic
6/20/2016 23:44	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	I support the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project. It will create a low stress, park like path for people to walk and bike between Watertown and Cambridge. This path could become as popular for people commuting into Cambridge as the Minuteman Commuter Path. In order for this path to be usable throughout the year, it should be both paved and well lit at night. The 2 foot wide shoulders on either side should either be built as a running surface or incorporated in to the path paving. People who run tend to run just off to the side of paved paths where they think that the soil is a softer surface for their feet, however it creates a ledge between the paved path and the runners dirt path and can undermine the paved portion of the path. 12 feet wide is a little narrow for a well trafficked multi-use path. (The Southwest Corridor Park bike path is 10 feet wide and where it is shared with people walking the narrower width creates tension among users) Please plan to control ice accumulation and for snow plowing to make this usable throughout the winter. (the Southwest Corridor Park sees nearly 45% of the people commuting on it by bike in mid-winter as it does during the late spring and early fall) Thank you so much for designing this project and I look forward to using it when it is completed. Sincerely, Mark Tedrow 169 Sycamore St Roslindale, MA 02131	Mark Tedrow	169 Sycamore St Roslindale, MA 02131 US	Roslindale	MA	10/31/1905 0:00	mctedrow@gmail.com	
6/20/2016 23:47	Watertown-Cambridge Greenway Project - deadline June 30, 3016	Good evening, I am writing to support the Watertown-Cambridge multi-use greenway Project and ask that it moves forward as soon as possible. It is very important to the local community and to the greater community as an important loco-regional connection. It is vital that the project includes a large pathway and sufficient lighting. I understand this has been a topic of argument, but lighting is crucial to the safe usability of the path. There are many options that could work very well, including timed lights, motion-sensitive lighting, embedding lights on the underside of railings which are discrete yet effective, etc etc. This project must move forward for the communities benefit and I support this project and hope to see it come to fruition. Thank you, Jonathan Adams	Jonathan Adams	51 8th Street Cambridge, MA 02141 US	Cambridge	MA	11/10/1905 0:00	jon1adams@hotmail.com	

June 20, 2016

ATTN:

Dan Driscoll, DCR Director of Recreational Facilities Planning

On behalf of myself and Friends of the Greenway, Inc., please accept the following comments regarding the recent 75% Design Review presentation for the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway project.

To begin, we would just like to thank everyone who has helped make this important project a reality. As our comments make clear, we strongly support this initiative and believe that it represents the final, critical connector between existing multi-modal infrastructure already constructed to the North and the South. To that end, **we would like to particularly thank Dan Driscoll, Tracie Lenhardt, and the DCR project team for their hard work on this and other local recreation projects;** they have been particularly accommodating to our collective efforts as we work to create a new Friends of the Greenway organization.

We also wish to commend Cambridge City Manager Rich Rossi and his staff for their recent work in securing the remaining section of Watertown Branch railroad right of way north of Concord Avenue. Ultimately, this section of path can help directly connect North Cambridge and Porter Square residents to the Greenway path at Fresh Pond and beyond.

Second, **we would call on our municipal and state legislators to work hard to ensure adequate funding for this and other critical transportation infrastructure projects, both now and in the future.** At present, we have many badly needed projects competing for our limited dollars, but we believe that the Greenway's long acknowledged position as the final missing link between the Minuteman Trail and the Charles River makes it especially deserving of our limited funds. By all means, please increase the overall pot of money for such projects in the future, but for now, let's also make sure that shovel-ready projects like this actually get built today.

Third, on a less positive note, **we would point out that the task of commenting on the project has been made more difficult due to a failure to post the latest design drawings to the DCR website,** as was done following the 25% Design Review presentation. This makes it almost impossible to review those sections of path that were not specifically highlighted during the 75% presentation. We have made multiple requests for a full set of plans, but have yet to receive such a document.

Regarding those sections of path design that we have been able to review in detail, we would offer the following comments and suggestions:

- 1) **We commend DCR for choosing an overall route that takes full advantage of the existing rail corridor.** This will produce a path that is less disruptive of its environment and is more enjoyable for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2) **We commend DCR on widening the path to a full 12' of paved surface.** This will enhance the enjoyment of all users, while, hopefully, establishing a new standard for paths still to be built.
- 3) **We support the removal of parking at Holworthy Place.** Given that the neighbors don't want parking at this location, we believe that it is entirely appropriate to remove the current parking and substitute a fuller landscaping plan in its place.
- 4) **We would like to see the addition of a second entry point at Holworthy Place** to better align with both the existing desire lines across the tracks to the Star Market and with the most common walking

route from Holworthy Street. This second entrance would be at the southern end of the new plantings, 20-30' south of the currently proposed entrance. This additional entrance would also eliminate unnecessary cut-throughs that may damage the new plantings.

- 5) **We support the addition of an access point at Holworthy Street.** This is perhaps the most important change from the 25% Design, as it will greatly enhance the utility of the path for users going to and coming from Mount Auburn Street and towns to the west (Watertown, Belmont, etc.)
- 6) On the slope running along Holworthy Street where it meets Mount Auburn Street, we would ask that DCR work hard to create a design that preserves existing historic elements. We understand that the addition of access at this point calls for changes to the slope profile and the introduction of retaining wall structures, but, that said, **we believe that it would be extremely preferable to keep the existing concrete retaining walls that are currently present on the slope.** In collaboration with several prominent local architects, Friends of the Greenway has been studying this location for possible enhanced seating and access options, and it had been expected that these historic structures would be incorporated as design elements within that new design. The Watertown Branch rail spur was active for more than 150 years. As such, the historic features of the route should be embraced in the final design. Such reuse represents a unique opportunity to provide a new setting for cultural and community activity.
- 7) **We support the addition of a second path entrance at the Water Department,** which would eliminate the current improvised bike path route through the Water Department parking lot, a route which is both awkward and potentially dangerous. This additional entrance also serves to reduce the number of people accessing the path at the Water Department entrance, an especially dangerous spot.
- 8) **We would once again encourage the City of Cambridge to identify possible connecting paths both to Huron Avenue and to the Fresh Pond perimeter path.** We believe that an access point at Huron Avenue is critical to the local utility of the future Greenway, as Huron Avenue provides direct access to Glacken Field, the Russell Youth & Community Center, the Fresh Pond municipal golf course, the Haggerty School, Parents Nursery School, and the Aberdeen Avenue branch library. In addition, Huron Avenue provides a convenient entry point for Greenway users originating in the Strawberry Hill and Larchwood neighborhoods. This allows students attending school at the Tobin Montessori School or the Vassal Lane Upper School to utilize the Greenway on their daily commute rather than the existing surface streets, most of which currently lack separated cycling facilities. Separately, the Fresh Pond Reservation perimeter path lies very close to the future Greenway route: only 45-79' as measured at various points along its length. As a result, multiple casual paths have been created by Reservation users moving back and forth between the rail bed and the perimeter path. The unfortunate result has been extensive erosion within the existing pine forest terrain. Going forward, we would hope to see these multiple casual paths replaced with two clearly marked and well maintained paths: one at each end of the pine forest section of the route. This would allow simple access to and from the perimeter path for those Greenway users wishing to enjoy the Fresh Pond Reservation.
- 9) Regarding the treatment of existing structural elements along the corridor, **we would prefer sand blasting of the bridges and tunnels to whitewashing.** This will help retain a more natural environment within the Greenway corridor. If graffiti resistance is a concern, then we would support the application of a clear coat sealer rather than a white anti-graffiti paint.
- 10) We realize that this is more of an issue for MassDOT than for DCR, but **we continue to have concerns about the condition of the Mt Auburn Street bridge.** The bridge appears to have numerous structural issues, both with its above grade masonry piers (damaged by road salt) and with

the undersurface of the concrete bridge deck itself (which is shedding large chunks of concrete onto the future path below). We would hate to see the path finished on time next year, but then need to be closed so that safety repairs could be made to the bridge. Better to have structural issues addressed now, before path construction commences.

- 11) **We believe that the planned crossing of Arlington Street must be enhanced to better ensure the safety of Greenway users** We would ask that attention be focused on path-related improvements to the current Arlington Street intersection and that the plan be adjusted accordingly to improve the safety and usability of this crossing. As the intersection currently stands, this crossing utilizes a two-step crossing to connect from the existing Greenway path section to the new section. Should bikes follow the pedestrian signals? The traffic lights? Some other still to be designed method? At the very least, improved markings and bump-outs, with careful attention paid to the widths and locations of curb cuts, are needed to better define the intersection. Still better would be a dedicated, single-phase crossing, with a direct, diagonal path defined by a clearly marked and generously painted "path" through the intersection.

In conclusion, Friends of the Greenway reaffirms its commitment to the ongoing support, maintenance, and enhancement of the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway path. Please feel free to call on us whenever we can be of help. Should you have further questions about our comments above, please feel free to contact us. In the meantime, thank you for your time, attention, and hard work concerning this vital matter.

Sincerely,

Doug Brown
Founder
Friends of the Greenway, Inc.

Cc:

Richard Rossi, Cambridge City Manager
Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge Director of Environmental & Transportation Planning
Bill Deignan, City of Cambridge Transportation Program Manager
Cara Seiderman, City of Cambridge Transportation Program Manager
Cambridge City Council
State Representative Jon Hecht
State Senator Patricia Jehlen