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| To: | Mike O'Dowd MassDOT Project Manager | Date: | October 17, 2019 |
| From: | Jeff Dietrich Howard Stein Hudson | HSH Project No.: | 2013061.14 |
| Subject: | Massachusetts Department of Transportation Allston Multimodal Project Task Force Meeting #40 Meeting Notes of September 12, 2019 | | |

Overview

On September 12, 2019 members of the Allston Multimodal Project team and associated MassDOT staff held the 40th Task Force meeting for the project. The Task Force is composed of local residents, business owners, transportation, and open space advocates, elected officials representing communities impacted by the project, as well as representatives of local and state agencies. The purpose of the group is, through the application of its members' in-depth knowledge, to assist and advise the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) in refining the preferred alternative selected by the Secretary of Transportation for documentation in a state Final Environmental Impact Report and in two federal documents: a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Once the process associated with these environmental documents is completed, the project will be bid using a 25% design/build package which MassDOT will make available to interested general contractors.

At this Task Force meeting three presentations were given. The first presentation was made by Nate Cabral Curtis of Howard Stein Hudson. His presentation covered the recent task force project site walk and the public meetings held in Framingham and Worcester all held during the summer of 2019. Key pedestrian and bicycle access points, riverbank restoration and areas of storm water management were highlighted at various stops along the site walk. He reported that the public meetings in MetroWest had a good turnout from residents looking to hear how the project would impact their commute in and out of the city whether by train or by car.

The second presentation was made by Mark Fobert of Tetra Tech. His presentation covered the NEPA and MEPA processes, and agency coordination leading up to the Notice of Intent and the MEPA Project Notice of Project Change. The task force inquired what information from the agency coordination meetings would be made available to the public specifically decisions regarding mitigation and the alternatives analysis to allow the task force to provide comments.

The final presentation was made by Deneen Crosby a landscape architect from CSS. Her presentation covered potential park design and potential riverbank treatments for reconstruction of the Charles River riverbank. Park designs and riverbank treatments were based off of similarly located DCR parks and the DCR Charles River Basin Vegetation Management Plan. CSS's scalar studies illustrated the array of options for the park space. She shared results from a recent Boston Society of Architects event that depicted how people see themselves accessing and utilizing the park space. She concluded by discussing prototypes of the riverbank treatments which sparked a conversation about environmental impacts and alternatives analysis.

Discussion and Q&A were carried out concurrently with each presentation throughout the course of the meeting.

Agenda

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Detailed Meeting Minutes¹

Presentation by Nate Cabral Curtis, Howard Stein Hudson

C: Ed Ionata, Tetra Tech: Welcome everyone and thanks for coming. We've got a full agenda tonight. I'll go through it quickly to remind you. Nate will provide an update on the public meetings and site walk over the summer. Mark Fobert will provide an update on the work they are doing on the NEPA environmental impact statements and coordination with Federal Highway Agency coordination. Deneen Crosby will give us an update on the riverbank treatment, which I know we've moved several times. Beth Parent from Tetra Tech will go

¹ Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1.

through the stormwater approach. We have a full agenda, but we'll have a little bit of time at the end of each one of those items for some questions, but I will try to keep it moving so we can get this all in. Before we get going, it has been a while since we've been together so why don't we go around the room and have everyone quickly identify who they are and what their affiliation is to start.²

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis, *Howard Stein Hudson*: Good evening folks. I am Nate Cabral-Curtis from Howard Stein Hudson. Over the summer, we held two public information meetings west of Route 128 and a project site walk. Thank you very much to everyone that turned out for the site walk despite the warm temperatures that day. This graphic shows where we started by the Lincoln Street foot bridge and the orange dots are stopping points along the site walk. The site walk took the group through the project zone from the Lincoln Street footbridge, along Cambridge Street out to Paul Dudley White path to the Boston University Bridge. I'll provide you with some highlights from each location along the walk. Starting with the Franklin Street foot bridge, the project is aware that this is an important neighborhood connector and early replacement of the footbridge remains a MassDOT goal. We talked about how the columns for the foot bridge need to be placed to avoid impacting the need to move the road (I-90) and the railroad during construction.

We stopped at Linden Street and Lincoln Street. Galen talked with me about how pedestrians and bicyclists are looking to cross the road there. The project team is studying how to get a safe pedestrian crossing in this area. We also looked at the Lincoln Street pedestrian switchbacks as those will be reconstructed largely as they are today but with a compliant grade so those using mobility assistance devices will get up the ramps easier. The site walk stopped at Cambridge Street around Seattle Street as West Station will be approximately 800 feet from there towards Boston University. We talked about how Cambridge Street will be reconstructed with a separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities on both sides, fully protected intersections, and a triple-row of street trees - one on each side plus the median. A project goal since 2014 has been to protect Seattle and similar streets from cut-through traffic. MassDOT is coordinating with the Boston Transportation Department.

On the Paul Dudley White Path, we walked towards the bend near Kenmore where the temporary trestle would take off and head east towards the Boston University Bridge. We also took a look at the right turn into Cambridge from River Street. The concept in the DEIR removed any turn movement there, right now we are analyzing a single lane to provide that movement. We stopped at the Boston University Bridge where we talked about riverbank

² See appendix 1 for attendance.

restoration and how that will be built into the project and will probably look a bit similar to the work that DCR has already undertaken on the Cambridge side of the river. We also talked about how the proposed Soldiers Field Road viaduct will have the ability to capture and treat storm water before discharging into the river as opposed to conditions today, which is direct discharge from Soldiers Field Road.

Moving on to the public information meetings held in Framingham on July 18th and Worcester on August 14th. Thank you to the task force members who attended. Both meetings had great attendance and went as we expected. The question 'how will this benefit us in MetroWest' was asked directly at least once. Folks are very concerned with how they are going to keep moving during construction. There is a lot of talk about commuter rail and how it can be kept as effective as possible during construction especially at times when the Turnpike loses a lane. We had some discussions about how express buses might be worked into this. Conversations are ongoing with the MBTA to figure out how that might work as we get deeper into this process. There were lot of questions about what tactics we use to inform the public. I was able to speak a bit about what we've done for Chelsea Viaduct in terms of the MassDOT website, social media. There was a request for ongoing dialogue between MetroWest and Worcester. Mike O'Dowd of MassDOT assured them that these were not the last of the meetings with the public.

C: Hannah Kane, *State Representative*: I would really respectfully request that you not refer to it as Worcester. We have MetroWest and Central Mass as those are the two areas with communities along the line.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: Definitely.

Q: Anthony D'Isidoro, *Allston Civic Association*: Just a reassurance, as I bring it up all the time. Are the sound barriers for established neighborhoods on Lincoln Street and Pratt Street still an early hit as you are preparing for the Franklin Street overpass?

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: The sound barriers in the DEIR remain. The one along Pratt Street, is in there; it hasn't dropped out since the last time you saw it. Exactly when it would get constructed, is determined by the project team. I understand that it is a priority of the neighborhood as much as the footbridge is a priority of the neighborhood. I think it's fair to say it would be something that would be looked at as an early action step rather than, 'Oh yeah, we get to the end, we'll put it in the sound barrier.'

Q: Anthony D'Isidoro: I've told Mike we've been waiting for the Lincoln Street noise wall for 25 years. My understanding is that Lincoln Street is now part of the project. My understanding was

now with the Franklin Street overpass, that would be given a higher priority. Is it a high priority?

A: Mike O'Dowd, MassDOT: It is still within limits, I don't know the timeframe, but we haven't lost it.

Q: No Name Given: For those not on the taskforce, can we get notified about those meetings? Otherwise what's the point of signing up.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: If you are in the database, you should have gotten notification.

Q: Glen Berkowitz, *A Better City*: Thanks for that recap. When you went through 1st bullet talking about 3L putting back the right turn, did you also talk about the downside of doing that? The separated pedestrian and bicycle path that we're working so hard to create, goes away in order to create that space for the right-turn.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: It has to drop back to a shared-use path sooner. If you were to completely do away with the lane you would be able to carry the separate bicycle and pedestrian pathway all the way to River Street. As it stands currently, if you put the right turn lane back, you have to merge those into a shared use path prior to the intersection.

C: Glen Berkowitz: The way you have 3L makes it a zero-sum game between what pedestrians and cyclists would want for long-term future connectivity, but it's possible to do both. Did you mention during the site walk whether you're willing to look at possibility of doing both so Cambridge can get what they want, and pedestrian and cyclists can get what they need.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: I believe there was a discussion at a prior task force meeting. Mike, didn't we look at a structure over some of the dropping lanes of Soldiers Field Road to create more space?

A: Mike O'Dowd, MassDOT: Chris' team looking at spatial constraints with the underpass and retaining wall. I'm not exactly sure how much space is there to incorporate both.

C: Glen Berkowitz: I think the answer to your question is "no" you've never discussed it with the task force. What Mike said is right the team has been thinking about it internally, but I'll encourage you to bring the details to the task force. Good for it not to be a zero-sum game.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: Sure, there was a full set of minutes from the site walk posted today so you can read it to see what transpired.

C: **Glen Berkowitz:** I did read them. This discussion didn't show up in the transcript.

C: **Ari Ofsevit:** One very minor quibble, Glen Berkowitz is inferring that everyone in Cambridge supports a right turn there, as a Cambridge resident I can say it's at least ten minus one. I know there's a vociferous minority in Cambridge that is worried about adding one or two minutes of driving. I really don't know why this is back.

Presentation from Mark Fobert, Tetra Tech

C: **Mark Fobert, Tetra Tech:** I'm Mark Fobert from Tetra Tech. I'm going to fill you in on NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) coordination and interagency coordination. I'll try to keep the acronyms to a minimum. We're starting the NEPA process. We've had a couple major agency coordination meetings, one on July 16th and one July 27th where we presented the purpose and need for Federal Highway. We are working with them on refining that along with the schedules, the alternatives and how the project should be constructed. We're anticipating a Notice of Intent (NOI) later in October. That Notice of Intent is intent to file the Environmental Impact Statement for the project. Then we'll kick off the two-year period on One Federal Decision. It's a two-year period from the Notice of Intent being published to publication of the Record of Decision (ROD). Everything has to be completed in that two years rather aggressively but it's doable. Everyone will get chance to comment on project scoping report which will be published in the fall after the NOI. Public comment period will be 30 days. The scoping report will include public involvement plan, the purpose and need, the preliminary alternatives of the project and the methods for evaluating the environmental impacts. Some of those elements will be similar to what you've seen with the Draft Environmental Impact Report noise studies, air studies, things like that.

We are also filing a Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Project Notice of Change at the end of the year in order to update the MEPA record to the new alternative. We've been working the United State Coast Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers on a navigation impact report which outlines all the uses in the river and coordination meeting with river users. We've had additional meeting with the Coast Guard and Corps to discuss constructability of these structures. The possibility of ending up in the water during construction was presented at two different meetings. We also have the ANRAD-Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation, it's a complex way to say delineating the wetlands. Part of the MEPA process is nailing down the resource areas. We are confident it is consistently what we have shown in the project but it's good to get the official sign off from the conservation committees saying these are the locations of

the resource areas. We've also had a couple of permitting coordination meetings with Department of Environmental Protection. So that brings us to questions.

Q: Pallavi Mande, *Charles River Watershed Association*: When you made the reference to river users' meeting could you summarize the meeting?

A: Mark Fobert: It was basically to discuss the trestle and how it would impact river users. The Head of the Charles was there. We had a pretty good turnout. We discussed the possible impacts on the users having a trestle in the water for a long period of time.

Q: Galen Mook, *MassBike*: Are these publicly available? I'm looking at the website and I see the public meetings.³

A: Mark Fobert: All of this will be wrapped up and published in the scoping package which is coming out in a couple of months.

Q: Galen Mook: Can we all keep up on the same page so some of us don't get ahead? Wouldn't it make sense for all of us to be on the same page so we can have the most productive conversation?

A: Ed Ionata: I've suggested that FHWA give an update on those meetings at these task force meetings. I don't think we have formal minutes of those discussions with the regulatory agencies. Those agencies will have to concur with Purpose and Need and Scoping, which will then be available for public review, including here. Ken, do you have anything to add?

A: Ken Miller, *FHWA*: The Notice of Intent will have a Purpose and Need. We're trying to figure exactly how to do this working with federal agencies and the public process. There are some very defined deadlines and comment periods in the regulations, and we want to figure out how it works with this process.

C: Galen Mook: I understand that, and I respect that you have to follow deadlines. My point is if all these decisions get made outside these conversations, we don't know about them. You are meeting with some very important stakeholders and I would like to know how the process got to the decision of Purpose and Need, so we can more fully comment.

C: Mark Fobert: You'll also see the navigation impact report as it is a public document.

³ Minutes of this meeting can be seen at https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/09/18/dot-allston_20190718_stakeholder_minutes.pdf

- C: Jessica Robertson:** On the comment period, you mentioned the scoping packet will come out in a couple months and then a 30-day comment period. This group has unfortunate pattern of releasing documents the day before Thanksgiving and then due day before Christmas. So, to save us all a lot of time in writing letters asking you to extend the comment period, if you can just keep that in mind.
- A: Mark Fobert:** I think we'd have to check with legal to see if we can even extend the comment period.
- C: Ed Ionata:** I think the question is more, about the timing. We'll time the release, so the beginning date isn't Thanksgiving and the end date Christmas or the holidays.
- Q: Wendy Landman, WalkBoston:** Have you had any coordination meetings on 4F and section106, park and historic resource impacts especially now that it is also a federal process. It's very significant.
- A: Mark Fobert:** There has been talks within the Federal Highway and MassDOT Historic representatives. There's also been correspondence with MassHistoric but not a lot of back and forth.
- C: Wendy Landman:** 4f has significant alternative evaluation requirements and it something that the task force has been asking about for a long time. So, if that is advancing, that would be another set of conversations and documents the rest of us would like to see.
- A: Mark Fobert:** 4f will be in the Scoping Report.
- Q: Wendy Landman:** There's going to be alternative analysis with the Scoping Report?
- A: Mark Fobert:** Just which alternative is going to be carried forward into the DEIS.
- Q: Wendy Landman:** Including mitigation? We have been asking for a long time. 4f choices have to include with and without mitigation.
- A: Mark Fobert:** Conceptually yes, but then they get fleshed out in the DEIS and then going forward they get fleshed out more. We will have much more detail in the larger environmental documents, rather than in the scope.
- C: Wendy Landman:** We've all been asking about choosing an alternative before mitigation, "least possible harm" and then mitigation.

A: Mark Fobert: That is exactly where we are. There will be an alternative analysis in the Scoping Report.

C: Jessica Robertson: But will it include or not include mitigation?

A: Mark Fobert: It will include some conceptual mitigation. The detailed mitigation will be in DEIS and other documents at a later date. The Scoping Report is not a complete DEIS. It is a 100-page summary of what we're going to look at, how to study.

C: Laura Jasinki, *Charles River Conservancy*: I think related to that mitigation conversation and probably most pertinent, I'm going between the permitting and the reference of the meetings with the river users and going into the river and riverbank. Just want to be clear that I think there hasn't been official comments yet on parts like the Charles River conservancy, but in no way have we accepted this idea of having a mid-river highway. Right. I think this is a huge deal and a huge jump to the conversation that has been happening for years up to this point. It requires a stop and pause and really think about what that means and really need to see how we got there. We jumped from not touching the river to just kidding, there's a road in the middle of the river and that's a huge jump. I think we have a lot to do to get there and it clearly impacts what mitigation looks like in the report. We want to understand how, where that fits in.

A: Mark Fobert: True. The Scoping Report and Notice of Project Change to be filed with MEPA and will include how we got where we are, and constructability. There will be a public comment period which we will respond to and explain why and what we are doing. The constructability has impacts on the river, so it has to be disclosed in the MEPA/NEPA process. Usually construction is last, but construction has impacts here so it's upfront.

C: Jack Halverson, *Boston Planning and Development Agency*: To follow up on the impacts to the river, it seems to be procedurally that those subjects should be dealt with in more detail by this task force with separate presentation and discussion before those documents come out. To ask for written comments, as we've said, we'd like to see work in progress with respect to meeting you had with the department, I understand there were a number of significant issues presented. It would be useful to present those issues to the task force.

C: Pallavi Mande: To clarify, we met with the river community that is what is confusing. I was there, wanted to talk about how meeting was focused on water-sheet standpoint more than park standpoint. The park users' perspective is important to integrate into Navigation Impact Report and I know you are planning to do that. The boating community has only been brought to the table recently, their perspective needs to be formally received and shared before we move on to

figure out how we balance what we've been talking about for riverbank stabilization what it means to put a structure in the river.

C: Mark Fobert: The USCG process defines that very well. The River users are the first step in the Navigation Impact Report. It will get circulated around. It is a living document gets refined if we find anything new. The Coast Guard considers it living. That document does give you a point of reference who's using the river and how they might get affected.

Q: Bob Sloane, *WalkBoston*: Will this task force be the Advisory Group for the preparation of the DEIS?

Q: Ed Ionata: What do you mean by advisory group? This task force will continue in its current role but there isn't a formal MEPA or NEPA advisory group.

Q: Bob Sloane: Even adding federal issues?

A: Ed Ionata: There are no separate plans at this point for any kind of separate group.

A: Ken Miller: The public participation plan is part of the scoping document; we envision that the task force will be a component of that plan.

A: Ed Ionata: If you're asking if there's a different group, a NEPA group, there answer is no. At this point it would be the general public review, agency review, plus this group. There are sometimes specialized groups in MEPA, but in NEPA it's up to the proponent to use established methods.

C: Tom Nally, *A Better City*: You'll get much better comments on scoping if we understand the process, rationale, and alternatives, to say if we need more or less, but we need to understand it to give substantive comments.

Q: No Name Given: I was out of town for the first river users' meeting, so I may be behind but the Coast Guard Navigation Report, is that being prepared and being reviewed by the Coast Guard?

A: Mark Fobert: The Coast Guard is reviewing but we do not have the final sign off yet, but they are close. Like I said, it's a living document so if there are changes or if we missed a group or some river users' concerns, it will be added and updated to the Coast Guard.

Q: No Name Given: How do we get access to this?

A: Ed Ionata: The Coast Guard will issue the report. We can let everyone on the task force know when that happens.

Q: Glen Berkowitz: In the next 30 days, can the project team agree to hold a separate workshop akin to the 10 Park Plaza ones that we've done in the past, simply to discuss what six or eight people just mentioned: proposal for trestle in the heart of the river and whether there are feasible/practicable alternatives. Show us the details for that which you haven't done as to why you can't just stay on the edge. Can you commit tonight to schedule that kind of workshop and open it up to the task force members?

A: Mike O'Dowd: November is what we are working on for that working session.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: We were able to get that late afternoon slot so the meeting will be November 13 from 2-5 p.m. We have three hours in this room for a workshop session.

A: Mike O'Dowd: No, to a workshop in October but yes to a workshop in November.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: It will be November 13th at 2:00 PM⁴ it's a three-hour window. We have the room all the way until five and we specifically booked the three-hour window to allow people to drop in, drop out. So that way you want to show up for an hour or stay for three hours, you can, and we'll have the snacks the same way. We always do.

C: Jessica Robertson: So, that is going to be another one of your workshops with nobody taking notes?

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: No, anytime we do multiple tables, we have people taking notes. If you look at the task force meetings where we've had multiple tables folks take notes.

C: Fred Yalouris: Whenever that takes place, there are a couple of things that are important. It would be useful to provide materials in advance as to the reasons you're in the river at all and as far as you are. This is central to concerns of lots of people far away from the edge of the river. #1, hybrid from IRT had a "temporary missing PDW for 10 years", and a decade is forever. There's a reason you're in the river. For all the years you've looked at this that was the best you came up with and that was unacceptable. #2 constructible process that doesn't disadvantage everyone in MetroWest and the Allston, Brighton communities who will be overwhelmed by spillover traffic if not done well. That takes space. I was delighted to see you were in the river because I don't think you can build this responsibly without going in the river. I don't know if you have to go exactly as

⁴ To ensure adequate time for discussions, this meeting has been set to run from 2-6PM on November 13th.

far as you are, but there are a lot of stakeholders that are pretty far from the edge of the river whose interests are affected by this decision. I think it is important to have documents in advance explaining how you got where you are because I think you have a valid process and explanation for dimensions. It would be good to have a common understanding of why you are in the river before the workshop. Second: important to work to get people from Central Massachusetts and MetroWest to understand that meeting is important to them, too, lots of potential impacts that I hope won't be true because you've got enough space to do this. Make sure we're all playing with a full set of facts.

A: Mark Fobert: We started that conversation a few meetings back. Jim overviewed why we have to use a trestle, but we can update that for you all and to explain to any permitting agencies.

Q: Bob Sloane: Have you looked at alternatives to the trestle and are you going to? Something in river other than trestle?

A: Mike O'Dowd: We are looking at other alternatives, but all have impacts within the waterway.

Q: Laura Jasinski: When you say MEPA and agency coordination, are those the agencies listed the only ones or are there others?

A: Mark Fobert: There are cooperating agencies and participating agencies. I don't have the full list in my head. Cooperating agencies include the Army Corps of Engineers, the USGC, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). We can put this list online as part of this minutes set.⁵

⁵ The following agencies have been identified as potential Cooperating Agencies:

- Federal Transit Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE);
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG);
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA);
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); and
- Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

The following agencies have been identified as potential Participating Agencies:

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP);
- Federal Rail Administration (FRA);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI);
- Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Officer (MSHPO); and
- Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office;
- Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA);
- City of Boston Public Works Department (Boston PWD);
- City of Boston, Planning and Development Agency;
- Boston Transportation Department;
- Boston Conservation Commission;

Presentation from Deneen Crosby, CSS

C: Deneen Crosby: I'm a landscape architect with CSS. I have many years of park design experience. Several months ago, we did some prototypical bank treatments for what might happen along the river's edge. They were based on what DCR has done in different locations along the Charles River, the prototypes of what planting might look like. The bank needs to be integrated into park design, and the park itself is part of a system of parks on the riverbank and on the interior of the project area which hasn't been developed yet. It's the new development so that, we assume would have an open space system of its own that will lead out to the parks.

I wanted to start talking about the park first before getting into the bank. Our project area is here, here's the River Street Bridge and the Boston University Bridge. The last comprehensive master plan for this area was done by DCR's predecessor, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) in 2002. They had effectively a bicycle path and a riverbank and really no land there to do anything. We are across from Magazine Beach, which is heavily programmed with sports fields, boats, a pool, and an exercise area. Our project will create considerably more space than the 2002 document envisioned.

More recently, the park was discussed a bit in Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) Placemaking study. This is older scheme but because we have more land, we've made a node, it's a now large enough to be a potential destination. Activities mentioned include informal recreation, gatherings, events, celebrations, enjoyment of the river. One thing I wanted to point out is it talks about potentially raising the grade as resiliency planning. On the other side of that is lowering the grade for flood storage. So, the point is I think there are a lot of things about the park that don't have to be determined now. Thinking about the landform is an important even this early on. George Bachelor and I sat in on some of the focus groups at the Boston Society of Architects' charrette. I was hoping BSA would have something out as summary of that, but I have not seen anything yet. Here are our sketches and the photographs that we took. We bulleted some themes. The Agganis Way crossover was a very desirable link with opportunities for vistas of and bidirectional connections to the river. Some of the connections were sculptural. People were thinking about this as being a structure in the landscape you would see. The point for us is that even at concept level, there is quite a bit of real estate given over to circulation for something like this to happen.

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- Boston Water and Sewer Commission; and
 - Amtrak.

The next one was this nexus: Boston University Bridge, Grand Junction, and Commonwealth Avenue—again sculptural structures connecting all three. In our group, there was a question of whether you can get from Commonwealth Avenue underneath the proposed structure to the river, and it looks like you can. How that connection gets made should be thought about now even if that ramp is integrated into future development. Then the Allston Throat Esplanade—these are great sketches—the back edge of the park is against the highway. Some ideas for buffer include interesting fencing, planting, expanding towards the river—people going out over, wetlands created over and getting people away from the highway. The theme of separating bicyclists from the walking park was also in the charette. I may not have it all but those are some key points.

Here are some other things we know. We know approximately how big it is. It is about 140' wide at widest, and 420' long. We did some scalar studies to show how wide that is and what that might feel like. This is area west of the lagoon by Boston University with passive seating and lots of trees. This is the Hatch Shell; what we have up in Allston is about half as wide. It's big enough for events, not Hatch Shell-sized but certainly wide enough for the kinds of things that were mentioned in the placemaking studying. Magazine Beach; not as wide but also all of this is sports field, so the river's edge would be wider here. If you think about the North Riverbank up near Harvard, it's pretty similar to what we'd have in Allston west of the throat, that is, wide enough to festivals and gatherings.

Then I looked at some other rivers with very different characters but similar programs of separate bicycle and pedestrian ways with plantings and thinking about what the relationship to the river might be. Bow River Walk in Calgary has a similar width and length. Passaic in New Jersey is much more urban and has separated circulation with a public art component. I am not suggesting this is what we'd do but I am suggesting that there are a lot of ways we could design a park of this size. We need to figure out what we want to do now and what can/should wait as the park is many years out. Hunters' Point South in New York is a wetland area with similar width. There is the potential for lots of stormwater basins in this area so that gives you an idea of that kind of character.

We know we have this separated bicycle/pedestrian path as much as possible. The widths have been consistent as long as I've been on the project: a minimum four feet separation, with ten-foot paths for each mode. So, in the narrowest section, that's basically all that fits there. We know the access points; Cambridge Street at River street, at-grade access over Soldiers' Field Road a little further south; a connection to the rest of the Paul Dudley White Path under the Boston

University Bridge, and a future access from Agganis Wat. We believe it is feasible to get access Commonwealth Avenue through the river's edge as well.

This is one alternative of River Street that we were just talking about. There is a combined path of 12' at River Street in the scheme with the right-turn lane into Cambridge. I'm not familiar with what Glen Berkowitz was talking about going underneath. We did an earlier scheme that did not have cars that had separated bicycle and pedestrian areas. For those who want more information, it's about 400' from intersection where paths can be separated with planting around the road edge. We know future access point at CSS, we don't know exactly what looks like or how it connects to an open space system, but it is at-grade. There are likely lot of people coming and going from that location as part of the open space system.

This is a precedent image for under the structure as we have to think about what the structure would look like, what the underside is. This is the model shot from an earlier meeting showing the back edge as largely walls and fencing. As I mentioned there is a real back to the park except at entrances. These are precedents of what's done at the backs of parks. Some are very high, but walls/fencing/planting/green wall structures/terracing a slope. There is potential to slope up against that wall or fence with grading, which can be wider than it needs to be if it creates usable area for people to sit.

We said what if we want about 15' at the highway edge, for sloping, planting or fencing. How much of this site could we get that as a buffer? Basically, everywhere except the narrowest section and right at the ends. That gives us enough room for a planting buffer, sloping against the walls would give us five or six feet of height. This is a sketch showing that. This is the same model shot but slopping up against the back edge with some planting giving it a much different feel. This is a sketch of narrowest section showing green wall. I think it raises an issue of, the desire for a four-foot minimum separation between the two paths as there might be places where we want to come closer in for shorter distances if there are benefits to doing that, like the ability to get more plantings.

Here are some of the river edge considerations. The extent of reconstruction, we know some of this bank will be completely reconstructed. There, we have flexibility to do what we think should be done. In terms of relationship of the park users to water, will there be access to the water anywhere along this edge? By access we mean informal steps, boulders, etc. and can we anticipate where we might want that. Biodiversity: DCR has a goal to increase biodiversity along the river's edge which means more width for different kinds of plantings. Regarding erosion and

slope, the gentler the slope is, the less of an issue of erosion. There is going to be a decrease in the number of outfalls, but we do not yet know how many and where they are.

Looking at these three project sections, the banks are quite steep here. Typically, they are 1:1, like 45-degree angle—that'll be stabilized with stone, erosion control or another stabilization technique. It's a bit steep to do just plantings. If you make that shallower and go to 2:1, it gives us more flexibility with plantings. In a place where you have a 1:1 slope, you are doubling the width of bank from 1:1 to 2:1 to give yourself a gentler slope more options for how the slope gets planted. This is from the DCR Charles River Basin Vegetation Management Plan which is – not out officially yet.

C: Rick Corsi, *Department of Conversation and Recreation*: It is not out yet officially. This is a draft.

C: Deneen Crosby: The objectives here are increasing biodiversity, stabilizing eroded shorelines, and figuring out what public access would be. So again, thinking about where people might go down to the water here: vistas. This prototype shows what a planted bank looks like at 2:1 with selected plants from DCR prototypes from their plant list. The DCR has prototypes for what to do in different areas. They have a plant list to use as well. 20-25' is a good width for biodiversity. So, we looked at 20 feet as a minimum. Where could that be done with park as it is now? Shown in the green stripe is how much of this could be increased to 20 feet. Stormwater basins and outfalls, we're going to have a presentation tonight, but the blue in this slide is the approximate area and location of where there might be stormwater basins. As I said earlier, we know the number of outfalls are reduced, but we don't know where they are yet. This is an existing outfall with an overlook built out over the pipe. There are precedents for building seating over outfalls. This is a more standard road culvert, and these are precedent images of marshy stormwater basins, or flood areas, etc.

Finally, the relationship of users to the water, it's early on to think about where we want to access the water, but we can think about it as "if we have a lot of people coming into park here at Soldiers Field Road that might not be the best place to immediately go down to the water's edge." If we can start to diagram some of these things in the park design, I think it will help to guide the concept plan from there. That's the end of my presentation. Any questions?

Q: Jessica Robertson: I have a comment regarding one of the perspectives you showed. I know that we have had some discussions about this before with the minimum four-foot separation between the bicycle and pedestrian path isn't quite enough room for a tree to be healthy. I think we really have to find a way to plant trees there even if it means cannibalizing from a slope on

the other side. Currently we have trees along both sides that are bedraggled and in poor health but they still make a really comfortable environment for biking in the summer. It would be very disappointing if we could not recreate that.

A: Deneen Crosby: I agree that four feet is not ideal for tree planting. There are ways to do it; it just takes more subsurface work so that you can direct tree roots to where they can get water and air. The other issue with that is that the tree roots lift up that pavement for the bicycles.

C: Jessica Robertson: If that's a goal of project to make sure we can plant trees along path, then we should show that in the drawings, and if not let's have a conversation about what we need to give up to get those trees into the project.

C: Bill Deignan *City of Cambridge*: Thanks, Deneen. There were some really interesting ideas there. In the narrowest area, I did want to second what Jess was saying about being more creative/aggressive with what we can do there. Originally, we thought that area was going to be wider, but it didn't include shoulders on I-90 which has removed space from the riverbank. Now it is a very minimal area and there is just not enough space to do much.

C: Deneen Crosby: It is very limited for a short distance, yes.

C: Bill Deignan: I think we need to think about how we can expand in that area. I don't know if it is board-walking short sections of the path over the river in the final conditions to get more space for landscaping and stormwater. As you said, we need to think about the future in terms of stormwater and storage, as I think those are going to be big issues.

Q: Henrietta Davis: How can you envision future recreational uses in that part of the river? Right now, it does not have much use except for coming-and-going of rowers. We have boat dock at Magazine Beach. Do you want to encourage people to paddle across the river and get out? The way it is now, there is no place to land with a boat, canoe or kayak. Do you want to encourage that? I don't know if you want to encourage that as maybe it is in conflict with the general use, but there is a potential to see it in a more lagoon-y way than just as a throughway for boat traffic.

A: Deneen Crosby: I think as a group we have not had conversations about park programming. This is a great time for thoughts about it; if you have any thoughts, please tell us.

C: Pallavi Mande: Thanks again. It is really good that we're starting with precedents including landscape infrastructure, water, storm water. I for one am pleased to see the thinking has been

in that arena; I feel like, before we program every square foot of this park with active or passive uses, it would be important to understand how that programming is connected to where the outfalls come out to the river. I expect we'll hear more about stormwater/park design overlays. We're constraining ourselves given that this is the only park we can talk about in this setting, but there are opportunities landward before we push everything into the river, for stormwater and others. To extent we think about providing wetlands in the water sheet let's also think about what we can do on the land and beyond the park footprint. If you do trace the outfalls and culverts, that might be a good sense of where that buffering, and wetland repair zones could start. It could easily be tied to access routes for bicycles/pedestrians from the neighborhood. I understand the land is owned by Harvard, but if project going to meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements you'll need some real estate to put these green infrastructure strategies in as not everything can be put underground as we are dealing with high ground water. Let's get real and talk about how much of this land that belongs to Harvard has to be dedicated to green infrastructure on surface. It will only help the conversation about making those open space connections. We're seeing a lot of pocket-park typology, which I think is so 18th century, so the creativity has to extend beyond the footprint we're all putting ourselves into and stretch pragmatically and driven by stormwater infrastructure as a guiding footprint.

Q: Bob Sloane: There are widespread reports of an environmental emergency on the Charles River regarding algae infestation. Looking at it, seems like result the DCR's use of chemical maintenance at Magazine Beach. Do you plan to use chemical maintenance?

A: Deneen Crosby: I don't think we've had any conversation about the maintenance of the park at all. I would say for maintenance, someone from DCR can comment on that but the park itself is many, many years out.

C: David Loutzenheiser, MAPC: Could you go back to slide 38, please? I would encourage you to not to limit yourself to two ten-foot separated paths in the narrowest section. You could combine paths into one or a 12-foot path with an adjacent four-foot shoulder. I think it's really important. The buffers between the highway and the park are important, thank you for displaying them. I think should be prioritized over maintaining two ten-foot paths. At the widest section of the park, how is that setback of Soldiers Field Road determined? Is there flexibility to get more space for a park? And related, when you look at Assembly Square where they put buildings/shops/restaurants facing the park, which is more effective park space than having a highway next to it. So maybe pushing it back further could be a solution there to make that a developable site rather than having the highway right next to it.

Q: Name Not Given: Can anybody indicate how we wound up with the edge where it is?

A: Ed Ionata: So, the alignment of Soldiers Field Road: the realignment was essentially back-and-forth in meeting between MassDOT and the landowner. There are some existing utilities out there that cannot be rerouted for example the MWRA sewer. It's a combination of the two is kind of how we ended up there. So, Harvard gave a greenlight for that alignment.

Q: Jack Wofford: Deneen, thank you so much for the presentation showing elements of potential in this area. In terms of potentiality, there's a connection between the earlier discussion of the trestle and temporary impacts on the river and the ultimate permanent river edge. In terms of a win-win solution, have you looked at, for example, expanding the landfill into the river in a modest way, as part of the temporary construction and whether that permanent portion could be retained and improved in a way not to interfere with the boaters and others? Have you looked at those issues? Because just from this meeting and these two sections there seems to be lots of potential.

A: Deneen Crosby: So, we have not done that to date. I think we all kind of think about it, but it has not been done to date. Could we do that? I'm looking at the environmental members of the project team here.

A: Mark Fobert: There's a strong resistance from the permitting agencies for permanent fill in the river on a permanent basis.

C: Jack Wofford: We understand there is resistance but there's also resistance to a ten-year temporary structure. If you put these issues together you could get to something much more beneficial for the next 50-100 years.

C: Wendy Landman: This is really why I was asking about 4f 106. Mitigation that is going to be required for parkland, if there is long term construction impact and then we restore the park back to its unacceptable condition, that's not mitigating the impacts of the project. Rather than saying it's about the objections of the permitting agencies, I think there needs to be approach that says we need to come out in a better environment for the river and for all the humans who use the park. That's really why I asked the question about that piece of permitting. The mitigation can't just be we'll spend a billion dollars and put it back into its unacceptable condition. It can be the best landscape design in the world but if there's no space, there's no space. This is what the taskforce has been encouraging MassDOT and consultants to do all along. Deneen thank you, for your presentation. It was really helpful and terrific, but to agree with Jack, I think saying over the objections of the permitting agencies, which permitting

agencies? There are many reviewers and not all of them are saying don't touch the river ever. There are others that are saying this is a national registered park district you have to have a place.

C: Jessica Robertson Can I just add one thing? We've asked for this numerous times, at the very least, the last three taskforce meetings in a row. The FEIS process is alternatives analysis. At least one should include something that mitigates by having something with wider space in order to make space for storm water mitigation etc.

A: Jim Cerbone, MassDOT: All permitting agencies go through an alternatives analysis. There are two types of flora: parkland flora and historic flora because we're generating significant parkland, we have a net benefit. We don't need to fill the river to achieve that.

C: Wendy Landman: Excuse me, you know the net benefit can't be we're doing something here and leaving a bad condition there. It has to be looked at as a totality.

A: Jim Cerbone: I don't see where there's a bad condition because we are generating additional parkland. That's beneficial to the parkland. We have to balance the desire for more parkland with MassHistoric's interpretation of avoiding an adverse effect on the historic component of the Historic District which is the Charles River Basin. But to get back to the other agencies, the trestle is considered a temporary impact—although long in duration and you might not see it as temporary—US Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers, DEP, all consider that a temporary impact because everything that goes in will be removed and there will be no permanent fill. That's much more favorable when trying to permit the project.

Q: Jessica Robertson: Will alternatives include one alternative that has slightly a wider area of land in the narrowest section in order to have things like trees next to it

A: Jim Cerbone: None will involve filling the river permanently.

C: Jessica Robertson: We've all asked many times that one of the alternatives for you to study includes an alternative that widens the river in its narrowest location. For a reasonable amount for specific purposes and to evaluate that against the others. Then permitting agencies can decide whether it's worth it and whether it's valuable as mitigation but they can't decide that if you don't study it.

Q: Bob Sloane: Could DEP or someone else come talk to us, and tell us their reasoning? It seems to me that some of the reasons are that it isn't sustainable.

- A: Jim Cerbone:** It seems like you can check that through the public process.
- C: Bob Sloane:** That's what this is. They're constraining what we're looking at so we ought to have an explanation of why the constraint is so important to them.
- C: Name Not Given:** I had the impression that some of Deneen's proposals along the length, particularly in the throat area, implied some filling and some encroachment into the river.
- A: Deneen Crosby:** Those are all within the current bank.
- A: Jim Cerbone:** Anything proposed in the current plan is all temporary. It will be removed with complete bank restoration. Anything involving permanent fill eliminates potential habitat, they see it as a totally different criterion when it comes to that.
- C: Jack Wofford:** Many of us at the table would say that the environmental review process particularly from the Federal perspective doesn't necessarily accept these as absolute constraints but rather looks at them as issues and challenges and seeks alternatives to deal with them in a way that enhances the environment. That's what Jessica is asking and has repeated taskforce after taskforce. At least develop an alternative that in an honest way will result in an improvement in that part of the river's parkland system. Along the lines of some of Deneen's photographs and graphics have demonstrated it would be possible. The issue is whether you'd look into it, not whether you're committed to it.
- A: Jim Cerbone:** DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers look at permanent fill versus temporary fill.
- C: Jessica Robertson:** Let the Army Corps look at the alternative and tell you that its unacceptable rather than you pre-deciding that it is unacceptable.
- A: Jim Cerbone:** I'm not deciding, I am sharing with you what they have told us.
- C: Wendy Landman:** We have examples up and down the Charles River. The entire North Bank Park was built on filled land. I'm sorry but you are talking to a group of people whom understand the history of the Charles River. This has not been absolute on the Charles River, even in recent years. So, when you say you're not going to look at it, what we hear is that someone somewhere is laying down an inappropriate decision for this park, and for this river and we have been asking this for five years. If there's another environmental document that doesn't look at that, many of us will argue forcefully that it is an incomplete document and that you need to generate new alternatives. So, we ask that you do that now so that we don't have a restart, again.

Q: Henrietta Davis: I think it's a logical question and I don't know all of the legal ramifications. If you look at the riverbank and pathway, you see that it's faulty, it doesn't work. To think that going forward, with stormwater being a much larger issue, you are going to have to be able to accommodate rising in the river, so I think it will need another approach with or without us. The banks are in terrible shape now and you want to keep them that way? It doesn't make any sense. So, I think there needs to be a break the logjam of a mindset that says it has to be the way it is, which isn't satisfying anything except for an entirely legalistic approach that isn't fully agreed upon. So, I think it'd be better to step back and say 'What would work best here? What would make the river work for multiple users? Do people want to get down to the river's edge, and if they do, how are they going to do that, if you keep it as is?'

A: Jim Cerbone: The bank restoration will be quite significant, as Deneen stated. The bank restoration is going to be a very significant component of the project. But there's a big difference between expanding or changing the grade of the slope to accommodate a better bank, which is a steep bank now, that's acceptable in the regulations, versus just adding fill to the river simply to create parkland when you've already generated a significant amount.

Q: Henrietta Davis: I think there are other reasons to look at the parkland over time. As Wendy said, the history of this river is, this river was made by man. This is not something that not nature created, and we must never change, because we already did. We continue to do that over time to accommodate changing natural and human needs. I think we have to be a lot smarter about this rather than getting stuck. I mean the throat is a terrible thing that people have really pushed to try to make better but if you can't plant a tree in there, is that an overall environmental good? So, I have to challenge whatever regulations you're pointing at to say we want the right answer, not the answer that respects current regulations.

C: Glen Berkowitz: I've had my hand up for a while. Let's remind ourselves of what you presented to us in June. You presented the new concept of this trestle out in the river for a temporary condition for Soldiers Field Road eastbound and westbound and Paul Dudley White 81' wide, several thousand feet long, out in the river. For the last half-hour, people haven't been talking about that space, they're talking about the space right against the bank. What you showed in June also filled in and expanded the bank into the river to temporarily hold -I90 Westbound. The concept plan said metal-sheet-piled and filled in the drawing you showed. My point is that the people asking you to think about widening the bank to make this picture something we could hand to our children and grandchildren to be proud of what we all did. We agree that this is better than what we'd seen before, but wouldn't it be so much nicer if you found a way to get another x. feet. The point I'm making is that your own plans show you widening out into the

river, not staying on the bank, the whole length of the throat, with fill. You call it temporary, but I interpret the people who spoke before me asking if you would at least consider an alternative where when you're going to widen the bank into the river for 10 years anyways to house a lane of I-90 Westbound, that you consider an option that would allow you to make the permanent condition really great as a permanent condition. Do others agree?

Q: Jessica Robertson: Can we get a specific answer on this? Because this is the third meeting in a row that we've asked for this and I would really like to get an answer on whether we could have one alternative that considers this.

A: Mike O'Dowd: I'll bring the comments back to leadership. Like I have said before and I will repeat it again tonight, both the Secretaries of Transportation and EEA would not endorse anything that includes permanent fill.

C: Jessica Robertson: You don't have to endorse it; you just have to study it.

A: Mike O'Dowd: That's why I said I'll bring it back to the leadership and see what their response is.

Q: Wendy Landman: When you bring that request, if their answer is no, could they please come to this meeting? They've come before, and I think we deserve to hear that face-to-face as we have put in many years on this task force.

A: Ed Ionata: For folks who couldn't hear up here. Basically, Mike said, several requests have gone to MassDOT leadership to consider permanent fill in river, the policy decision has been to avoid any permanent fill, and Mike will bring to them to see if an alternative can be looked at to do that. And there is a request that if the answer is no, the Secretary come and explain why.

C: Wendy Landman: To have EEA and Secretary of Transportation come together, specifically. Mike said he brought it up to both of them. The EEA Secretary hasn't joined us yet, Secretary Pollack has.

C: Glen Berkowitz: To clarify one thing. What's different about today's ask is that when project team members have asked that previously, it was before you presented to us in June that you'll run sheet-piles or piles along the throat for 10 years. Today's ask, respectfully, is different: now that we're going to have this 10-year impact, there's interest from the task force in thinking about doing it in a way where the potential might to benefit from it on a long-term basis.

- A: Ed Ionata:** Realize that the discussion that led to proposing even temporary fill included leadership who said “temporary only if you have to, permanent off the table.” So, it is not like that was a vacuum packed decision.
- C: Jessica Robertson:** If that’s their answer they can come explain it to us themselves and we can explain our point of view.
- A: Ed Ionata:** As Mike said, he will ask.
- A: Mike O’Dowd:** I have asked in several different ways and the answer is still the same, but I will attempt it again.
- C: Ed Ionata:** Let’s try to go in order of who’s had their arms raised for a long time.
- C: Fred Yalouris:** For those that may remember, I was the director of architectural design for the Big Dig landscape team. I would like to offer two clear and present and successful examples. Fort Point Channel we added a considerable amount of land, narrowing the channel, creating park and trail space, making much more room for the mobility of vehicles. Secondly, North Point Park right down by the Museum of Science on the Charles River Basin, we added a considerable amount of land. Much to the better, changed an edge condition that is ugly and useless to a much more usable condition by people on bicycles and foot, not interfering with flow of water in the Charles. There are two very recent examples and I only think it’s fair to consider that fact in your deliberations.
- C: Pallavi Mande:** A couple of caveats, when I was talking about expanding the footprint of the parkland, yes, obviously for introducing wetlands, the water sheet is a good option. I’m not suggesting that introducing fill is the only way to achieve the goals of this project. When we say we need to understand DEP and others environmental agencies are looking at when you do fill, where’s the compensatory flood storage that you provided? So you cannot have one part of the conversation without having the second couple because those of us who do this for a living understand it’s one thing to create parkland for the for people and the river’s benefit, but what you lose in the river has to be mitigated on the land. We all need to understand the consequences and opportunities on the land before we get into the water. If DEP and Army Corps can make us all understand why those regulations are there so it’s not a zero-sum game, what has to the drive conversation about fill has to be how fill creates ecological health, including for people. I’m not taking the people out of the equation but I don’t think it’s compelling to talk only about parkland in the water-sheet because there’s no other land elsewhere, because there’s a bunch of land in this project area that we could program for park and green infrastructure but we keep getting

constrained by the current footprint. Last piece: the ask about impacts has been a long ask and I don't think we still understand what this temporary structure will do to the river. I can say yes, you'll take it out and that'll be better for the habitat but I don't believe that yet because I don't understand how the intervention will be impacting the river now, disturbing sediments that exist in the river. When you actually take it out of the river, if you take it out is that a net improvement? I'm not sure. So, I think it has to be a larger conversation before we say, 'Oh, well let's just put more parkland as mitigation for getting into this. You need to understand the impacts before we start to gauge what the scope of the mitigation is.

Q: No Name Given: The trestle design itself has not been a topic. But it will raise all sorts of issues, similar to what you're raising. From the point of view of river navigation, it couldn't be much worse. It's points of juncture, particularly in the west, are in the worst possible place. Its straight design maximally constrains the river. In some forum I hope you'll be prepared to discuss the design of the trestle, because it's not just a matter of navigation impacts: it will create conditions when it's there for 10 years. What are they, have you looked, does this design do the best it can with those impacts?

A: Ed Ionata: I'm pretty sure, if I understand what you're talking about, that's part of the November workshop.

A: Jim Cerbone: We've been working with the US Coast Guard, but so far, they don't have any serious concerns.

C: No Name Given: Not to be a wise ass but I've never seen the Coast Guard on that river.

A: Jim Cerbone: It's their jurisdiction, when it comes to structures in the river, any navigation river, it's their jurisdiction. Pallavi is correct in her description of filling and compensatory flood storage. There's nowhere along this section you can provide that compensatory flood storage if you fill the river.

C: Ed Ionata: That's become more important for the regulatory agencies over the last 10-20 years.

C: Jim Cerbone: When it comes to the USCG, the more you fill, you trigger a different level of permitting. Right now, we are onboard for a general permit, which is a much easier permitting process. If they go to individual permit then they're responsible for permitting process with regards to public involvement, which is a much-longer process which anyone could object to in the public.

Q: Jessica Robertson: Isn't this the fundamental misunderstanding of what we're asking for. We're not saying we're still the river. We're saying you want you to look at the best possible condition for the river bank area and water sheet that does not take such a hard line on where the bank has to be and so it might be possible that in fact the best solution is to shrink the amount of land and have marsh with a pedestrian boardwalk. Right? Like, we're not saying fill the river, we're saying don't have such a hard line about where the river's edge has to be and just look at what is the best condition.

C: Ed Ionata: So Galen, Fred and then can I get on to the next agenda topic? This conversation will go on in more depth. We can get some policy answers.

C: Galen Mook: Just a small point of like: you guys did a really good job of getting your permits to get your highway in the river. I'm sure that was challenging too. That's your forte. Please get the people who can do the riverbank restoration here. If you can't, that's fine. There are people who can, we have examples of it locally. Let's just get them in there. It's totally feasible. Like we are very talented. Let's get the right people here to make those calls.

I want to clarify something, and I want to disagree with David from MAPC who mentioned that it's okay to have cyclists and pedestrians converge on one single 12' wide pathway. I was a Boston University student. I'm an Allston resident, I'm a commuter. They are separate uses, they need separate pathways. At the ribbon cutting for the Frances Appleton Bridge, congratulations on building the best bridge in the world. It's fantastic. I asked the Esplanade Association, "I'm MassBike I'm here to hear your concerns. What are you hearing out there?" And what they want is to have those separated pathways for the bikers to go fast and for the people who need a stroll. If you're in a funnel, it's not going to work. Especially as we bring in Boston University students from Agganis Way. I agree with the need for trees, but we can't just funnel everyone down and expect everyone to get along. It's not going to work.

Q: Henrietta Davis: One of the things that Cambridge has been concerned about all along about the whole highway design are issues related to how does that temporary trestle come across the river in terms of noise and visibility and all that. How does this temporary structure do that? Is this a metal road that goes bang, bang 24/7? Are we to be protected from the noise? Magazine Beach is already a sensitive noise area, I think and has already proved its need for that protection. The key thing that's come up in neighborhood meetings that I have represented in this process is that people are already concerned about what the noise will be like coming from the proposed Soldiers' Field Road viaduct in the permanent condition. In terms of the temporary bridge, I doubt very much that those same people will be satisfied with you saying "hey, it's only

noisy for the next 10 years.” We also need to think about what things will be like when you are installing the piles and the noise is worse than you can imagine – I guess I can imagine, it’s easy enough to image. We don’t have anything that shows us what life will be like when that temporary highway is a hundred feet close to us than the existing road. Do you have an answer for that; is it something you can answer?

A: Jim Cerbone: I can tell you that I have been looking at that in great detail. It's not to the extent of conducting more studies until we have a preferred alternative, but that has been a big concern of mine because I am the noise program manager for MassDOT. I do understand the implications of having that temporary roadway there for ten years that much closer to Magazine Beach than the existing Soldiers Field Road. We are not going to design anything that would exacerbate condition such as an open grid deck. That would be disastrous. Once the noise study is conducted, we will look at mitigation associated with the temporary structure.

C: Ed Ionata: We’re going to move the stormwater presentation to next meeting since we’re close to closing time.

Q: Pallavi Mande: Can you still put the presentation online?

A: Beth Parent, Tetra Tech: I’d rather present it before I put it up.

C: Pallavi Mande: I understand.

Q: Harry Mattison, Charles River Conservancy: To echo my support for everything that Wendy and Jess and Galen and everyone has said, I think it’s right on and echoing it may help with your discussion with the senior management, but what I'd like to talk to you about, you can go back to the slide where you showed the different access routes? Excellent. Could you tell us a little bit about the status of the design of the little yellow arrow which is the Agganis footbridge?

A: Mike O’Dowd: Any of the alignments Chris, Jim, and the team are currently looking at as far as Soldiers Field Road/I-90 appear to be able to accommodate a future crossing from Agganis Way that would touch down on the open space that’s created.

Q: Harry Mattison: So, are there drawings or calculations you can share?

A: Mike O’Dowd: No, all we’ve been doing at this point is defining a window in the grades and the alignments of the roadways and the parkland to accommodate a future crossing.

Q: Harry Mattison: So, are there drawings of your window?

A: Mike O'Dowd: I think we've shown them here if I am not mistaken. As far as potential slopes, the gradients, cross slopes, clearances over any of the travel ways – those are all things we can bring back and show at the November workshop.

Q: Galen Mook: Have you talked to Boston University about this?

A: Mike O'Dowd: Great question, I was just reaching out to Steve to do that. We haven't talked yet, but we will in the future.

Q: Harry Mattison: Does anyone else recall drawings of slopes and grades?

A: Jim Keller, Tetra Tech: We showed those in February. We showed how the structure could fit over Soldiers Field Road whether we placed the parkway over either westbound or eastbound I-90.⁶

Q: Harry Mattison: Has there been any work on those since February?

A: Jim Keller: Very minor.

Q: Harry Mattison: So, that was before you made the Soldiers Field Road alignment decision?

A: Jim Keller: It was during the process.

A: Mike O'Dowd: I think we have some roll plans here if you want to take a look.

C: Harry Mattison: These are pretty schematic diagrams.

A: Jim Keller: We don't have anything like architectural drawings showing a bridge crossing like what was sketched for the BSA charrette.

Q: Harry Mattison: A considerable amount of the support we voiced a year ago for the Independent Review Team (IRT) Hybrid plan said that our support was contingent on how this might be mitigated, since it does have significant impact on parkland. Since then, you've told us we are getting less parkland than what the IRT suggested we could get, and you've added a highway in the river. Was that ever there when the IRT report came out?

⁶ These plans can be seen at https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/06/05/dot-allston_hybrid_plans.pdf

- A: Mike O'Dowd:** Even the authors of report weren't sure how to construct what they were proposing. That was left to the project team before you tonight to identify means and methods by which the IRT's ideas would come to fruition.
- Q: Harry Mattison:** There was no suggestion back then, by anyone that you would propose building a 4-lane highway in the river for ten years, right?
- A: Mike O'Dowd:** At that point in time I'm not sure if anyone had a full understanding about how one would construct the IRT alternative. It was only January of this year that the alternative was announced publicly, and we've been trying to figure out how to build it since then. We have been taking you along for the ride, to figure out how it could be constructed, where the alignment of that future elevated Soldiers Field Road crossing would be, westbound, eastbound, the grades and many other things. A lot has happened over the last seven to eight months, but the idea of constructing a temporary bridge in the waterway that arose earlier this spring after we presented to this task force a construction staging option for the throat which required us to single-track the Worcester Mainline for a significant period of construction. Both this group and others told us quite clearly, they wanted the commuter rail from Worcester at two tracks for as long as possible. The temporary trestle, as we presented to folks in Framingham in July, and Worcester in August is how we are currently trying to achieve that goal.
- C: Jessica Robertson:** The Agganis way crossing was one of the many benefits of the IRT hybrid alternative. That's why we want it included in this project.
- C: Harry Mattison:** Yes, because what's happened is we've learned more and more about negative impacts of the project. We've seen very little until tonight's presentation about the upsides of the project and how you're going to mitigate the negative impacts. The further you come along with those plans beyond the red rectangle [referring to the slide on the screen], the better.
- A: Mike O'Dowd:** Mark, as part of our discussions of mitigation, would those start at the DEIS? We wouldn't show anything of finality until the FEIS, would we?
- A: Mark Fobert:** The DEIS will have mitigation discussions in it.
- Q: Harry Mattison:** We're looking for real sketches of what these bridges could look like. What is the state of the design of the Grand Junction bridge over Soldiers Field Road?
- A: Ed Ionata:** We have to figure out roadway and then design the bridge.
- Q: Harry Mattison:** When do you anticipate that starting to come along?

A: Ed Ionata: That's a good question. We've been focused on environmental permitting aspects recently; we haven't discussed it yet.

A: Mark Fobert: It has to be included in the historic discussion.

Q: Jack Wofford: One more point about a connection between information received in June and the river's edge issues. As I understand that in the temporary plan, the turnpike will be three lanes in each direction for ten years. It raises the question of whether we ought now to look at that as the long-term condition. Will there be an alternative considering that? Including the tradeoff between the land needed for I-90 at four lanes in each direction or repurposing that land so that it can be contributed to parkland and parkways by the river. It seems that's exactly the kind of issue environmental process was designed to address.

Q: Galen Mook: Jack, are you just asking if they could just do that as an alternative?

Q: Jack Wofford: Mike, my question is this: in the June plans you showed the ten-year construction phasing with the turnpike as three lanes in each direction. This raises the issue of whether there is a tradeoff between going back to four lanes in each direction at the end of construction or whether by leaving it as three lanes in each direction we can unlock opportunities for more and better pathways through the park. Since the environmental process is required to examine the alternatives, will one be three lanes in each direction on the Turnpike to enhance the riverfront?

A: Mike O'Dowd: As far as committing to ten years of three lanes in each direction, we don't know what that timeframe is. We are currently working hard to constrain the amount of time that I-90 is reduced to three lanes in each direction. We are looking at ways we might get to a seven-lane configuration or get back out to the full eight lanes at points during construction. If we can limit I-90 to three lanes in each direction for a certain period of time to restore four lanes in each direction as quickly as possible, that's what we're striving to do. I've been clear and will continue to be clear: we do not want I-90 in a three-lane configuration for ten years, and we do not want to have a single-track Worcester Main Line operation for ten years. I am quite sure I have been clear on that. In terms of permanently taking a lane out of I-90 in each direction, the best I can do is refer you back to the answer the Secretary gave when she was asked; "Secretary Pollock would you consider going to a permanent three lanes in each direction on I-90?" The answer was a flat-out no. I'm sure the meeting minutes reflect that.⁷ I can bring that back along with the

⁷ See https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/07/17/AllstonMinutes_062718.pdf at page 59.

permanent fill in the waterway and see if there's any opportunity for reconsideration, but I doubt it very much.

C: Jack Wofford: I think the issue is whether it should be analyzed.

A: Mike O'Dowd: It's a fair point, Jack. CTPS continues to look at the more recent data we have given them from the AET toll transactions, the volumes, and the turning movements at the interchange as well as upstream and downstream locations. We're getting more and more analysis from CTPS about current and future demand. I'll bring that back and see what the response will be.

C: Mary Connaughton *Pioneer Institute*: We already feel like we're losing a whole lot from this project, and that our lives will be impacted for eight to ten years. The single track Worcester Mainline, I-90 at three lanes in each direction, work zone slowdowns and on top of that, we're paying for it all the while. The concept of reducing the existing situation is completely unacceptable. You should be looking at ways to help us—we're paying for a big chunk of this. There are five major developments in Framingham, they are expecting a commuter rail that works. We need help. There needs to be balance. If going in the river makes construction easier and faster, for 160,000 people every day going in and out of the city each day, then that's major. The parklands are important, we want this legacy, we also want to get to work and make money for our kids. We have to consider all perspectives.

C: Ari Ofsevit: What we need to look at is throughput. Someone said in the MetroWest meetings that during the Commonwealth Avenue project when I-90 was three lanes in each direction the throughput was the same, but the merges were the problems causing congestion. There may be bottlenecks upstream and downstream like people trying to cut the line in Newton Corner. The width of the turnpike might not be the end-all-be-all. With new the data, it might be worth looking at if it saves a lot of money and the same number of cars will get through, but if traffic jams worsen then clearly, we shouldn't.

Q: Galen Mook: Are we doing the noise analysis and other impacts of Soldiers Field Road in the river, the same way you did with I-90 being high or low? I'm really curious to see the numbers.

A: Mike O'Dowd: It is part of impact assessment for Draft Environmental Impact Statements. We haven't done it yet.

Q: Ed Ionata: You mean the temporary trestle?

C: Galen Mook: Yes, the one that will be there during construction. I think the noise into Cambridgeport is going to be exacerbated when you place SFR direction into an echo chamber.

Q: Fred Salvucci: I heard Mike O'Dowd refer to Agganis as future. That was the primary benefit of the Secretary's decision for the Hybrid, so the idea that it wouldn't be part of the design as of now is strange. I'm not questioning that Mike is reflecting current direction, but if that's future we need to come back to it.

In terms of what is temporary versus permanent: the layover yard for the commuter rail doesn't exist now and is supposed to run through an environmental analysis. If you're doing that right, it means you need to look at both doing it and not doing it. If you do build it, when does it go into operation?

A: Mike O'Dowd: I anticipate that layover would go into operation either during construction or immediately following it, but not before construction. There is an MBTA Railroad Operations desire to it implement immediately.

C: Fred Salvucci: That's about as feasible as constructing the project without going into the river. The layover is insane to even think about doing before the construction is done, so if you can live without it for ten years, the T has to figure out something else. That has snarled a bunch of issues.

By the way, apologies for being in a negative mode, the presentation was terrific, and it was beneficial to all of us to see the options that you've got going on. Two elements around the BSA charette: in the vicinity of the Boston University Bridge there was an expressed desire to get from Commonwealth Avenue to river as bicyclist or pedestrian. The work at charette was very convincing that it was feasible. That should be in the design of the little Grand Junction Line bridge now that the bridge is being considered as part of the project. That bridge should be built wide enough to carry bicycle/pedestrian connections to get over the river. You should add in at least the preliminary engineering to tie into the big Grand Junction bridge crossing the river. I think a lot of us would like to see that whole thing in this project, I understand you have direction about limits, but you can't design your part without a preliminary design for the whole bridge. There have to be alignments and profiles across the river that show where pedestrian and bicycle paths will get across the river. I urge that that be done.

The other concept from the charette, the concepts were dramatically less satisfactory was at the Agganis connection. The railroad connections at Worcester Main Line and Grand Junction Line are shown six to seven feet higher than today. That means the connection to Agganis is

disastrous. Agganis has a certain height and relationship to Boston University. Those track elevations should not be going up, and I think those are being driven by the goddamned layover which doesn't belong here to begin with. The South Station Expansion said there would be an environmental analysis which means considering building the layover and not building the layover and the ramifications of both. It screws up your construction, all your alignments, and gives you a profile that destroys a primary benefit of going to the hybrid that the Secretary argued was that Agganis connection. The idea that such a major driving factor is not included, and the profile will be destroyed by changes of the track alignment driven by a layover yard that has not been analyzed is unacceptable. None of us want to delay this project but these issues won't go away. They will come up in the Federal process if they don't come up in the State process. The consideration of alternatives is essential to the environmental process.

Going back to BSA, it's non-starter to imagine how bicycles and pedestrians could get up on the Boston University side with the introduction of a higher track. It's an even bigger mess on the other side as you are about three stories high and need to come down. The graphics in presentation seem to show that there's not enough width in the throat to have the two-path pedestrian/bicycle we all know makes sense. That has to be done right. What was unclear was the third dimension: how does the Agannis connector come over and get down to a human level at the water's edge. That's the part, looking at the plan, that looks reasonably fat like there's enough room to do stuff. If you start imagining what it would take to get down from that height it mangles one of the big environmental benefits of the wider park. Whereas near the Boston University Bridge there are good concepts from the charrette, the concepts for Agganis from charrette were a disaster. Advancing those and figuring out their connection to the layout and the track height is essential.

Last point, on the legalistic point; the State has tended to look at permitting on this as a permitting issue. All these different agencies have their little turf. Using that to constrain the alternatives you look at is not consistent with any reasonable definition of Federal law. It is wasting a lot of time on the schedule. I know you're more anxious than I am to get this under construction the bridge you have out there today falls down. You don't want to go to Federal process without looking at alternatives. The statement made earlier that the park will be bigger so it's okay, no. This is a DCR facility. DCR land includes Soldiers Field Road. It's not getting bigger afterwards, it's getting more complex. That space on Soldiers Field Road is at the expense of the river, temporarily and permanently. Show the alternatives so people can say I like / don't like it.

We've got in this room, Karl Haglund, who wrote this incredible book. How many people have read the history of the Charles he wrote? God didn't make the shape of this river. This river was built by humans and lots of human decisions. The idea that we can't consider a changed width is absurd. With the Federal law that requires you to look at alternatives, you have to look at alternatives. If that creates permitting complexity, so be it, but have you to lay out the alternatives so people can comment or question whether the regulatory agency is being reasonable.

The point that Henrietta made, that someone may want to get out of their boat; human access to the river is a valid reason for the DEP for doing this. Pre-screening what we're allowed to look at is totally unacceptable, and it has to be fixed or will be a major obstacle. The Secretary is an environmental law specialist, so she needs to understand that you can't pre-screen alternatives based on the attitude of one section of DEP. You can't screw up access to the region based on two squabbling sections of DEP. You should have Karl do a presentation of his book.

C: Ed Ionata: Mike is carrying the message upstairs.

C: Mike O'Dowd: That is going to be a long message.

C: Ed Ionata: We have to wrap up. Pallavi and Glen Berkowitz. Nate has a brief statement.

Q: Mike O'Dowd: Before we lose people, Nate can you make your announcement?

C: Nate Cabral Curtis: The next two meetings are 10/9, at 6-8 p.m. and then 11/3 2-5 p.m. We're aware that 10/9 is Yom Kippur,

C: Wendy Landman: You can't have a public meeting on the night of a major religious holiday.

A: Nate Cabral Curtis: I'm trying to move it. I'm trying to move one day to 10/10 or one week to 10/17 the moment.

C: Jessica Robertson: I'm sure I'm not the only one who's already really booked up, so we have to change that ASAP.

A: Nate Cabral Curtis: I tried to do it now. I have both a call and an email into the director of this facility. Whatever the answer is, it will be out to you tomorrow.

Q: Pallavi Mande: We understand stormwater piece will be presented next. Can we also request coupling with flood analysis? I haven't seen any resiliency analysis for this project, ever. Could

we have a few slides to make us understand how stormwater piece overlaps? One other piece, not in your control, but there's a development at Harvard Enterprise Research that's being planned, with huge drainage consequences: new outfalls, new culverts, etc. If you could acknowledge how the world will be different north of this project, that would be wonderful.

A: Beth Parent: We don't have their design at this time, but we know it's out there. We're still getting to the rest of what you want to see.

Q: Glen Berkowitz: What are the agenda items for the next meeting?

A: Ed Ionata: Stormwater is all that's set for now.

C: Jessica Robertson: I emailed Nate several weeks ago requesting timeline for all permitting milestones and general release dates.

A: Mark Fobert: We're developing that with permitting agencies. We're meeting this week.

Next Steps

The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2019. The meeting will take place at 6PM in the Fiorentino Community Center.