

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT
APRIL 2, 2019 COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING – SUMMARY MINUTES**

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

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: April 2, 2019; 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

ATTENDANCE:

CWG Members: Joseph Barr (City of Cambridge), Elliot Bradshaw (Brickbottom), Jennifer Dorsen (Somerville Ball Square), Ryan Dunn (Magoun Square), Dylan Manley (East Somerville), Jim McGinnis (Union Square), Justin Moeling (Gilman Square), Andrew Reker (City of Cambridge/Lechmere), Laurel Ruma (College Ave), Jim Silva (Medford Ball Square)

MassDOT/MBTA: Melissa Dullea – MBTA Senior Director of Service Planning, Terry McCarthy – MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement, David Scorse – MBTA Project Manager for AFC 2.0

GLX Constructors (GLXC): Hannah Brockhaus, Nic Sobe, Jeff Wagner, John West

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

Other Attendees: Viola Augustin (City of Somerville), Todd Blake (City of Medford), Tim Dineen (VNA resident), Andrea Leary (Assembly Connect), Allison Simmons (Assembly Connect)

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

BACKGROUND: The Green Line Extension (GLX) Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). The project intent is to extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. The goals of the project are to increase mobility; encourage public transit usage; improve regional air quality; ensure a more equitable distribution of transit services; and support opportunities for sustainable development.

PRESENTATION:

Terry McCarthy, MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement, gave introductions for the meeting and updated the group on a list of media publications that carried GLX bridge closing stories.

John West, the Project Manager for GLX Constructors (GLXC), gave a construction update including:

- Broadway Bridge closure update showing a video of the bridge demolition (see presentation slides 6-9)
- Washington Street Bridge closure (slides 10-15)
 - Phase I – April 8 (10 PM) to November 2019
 - Phase II – Spring 2020 to Fall 2020
 - Demolition is planned to be done over 3 days during daylight hours

Green Line Extension Project

- Demolition update
 - 3rd Avenue – Walker Building and ACPA Building demolition is complete (slide 16)
 - Homans Building demolition started March 18 (slide 17)
 - Ball Square will begin after Homan's Building in April/May (slide 18); it was also noted that the bowling alley signs had been given to a resident in return for a Boys and Girls Club donation
- Moles Boston Students Day tour of GLX (slide 19) on April 10 for 200 college students and with GLX team members serving as tour guides.
- Community Connection Team is having a Spring Food Drive (slide 20) for Project Soup in Somerville

Nic Sobe, GLXC Walls and Civil Work Discipline Lead, gave a presentation on wall design and construction (see slides 21-25).

Dave Scorse, MBTA Project Manager for AFC 2.0 (automated fare collection), gave a presentation on the coming new fare collection system being implemented on the MBTA system (see AFC 2.0 presentation)

Terry McCarthy thanked everyone for all the support in implementing the GLX bridge closures and maintenance of traffic planning.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ISSUES:

Broadway Bridge

A member commented that they feel people are adapting to the closure traffic-wise, but businesses are still very concerned and asked if there was any way the project could encourage people to visit these places during the closures. The project team said it is working with the City of Somerville to help promote the businesses. Also, they will continue to work with individual businesses.

The member followed-up to say that one particular dry cleaner in the area had said business dropped off 20% since the bus stop had been closed for the detour. The member said the Somerville shuttle stops at the side of the bridge and wondered if stops could be added where old bus stops were that could help businesses. The City of Somerville noted that the shuttle is still being adjusted but too many stops could affect usefulness of shuttle – but encouraged continued feedback. The City of Somerville said their Economic Development Department was working to hold events that would get people to Ball Square.

A comment was made that a Medford Convenient Store could use some promotion and that maybe GLX workers could patronize the store.

The City of Medford said they got notice from a gas station on Boston Avenue and Harvard saying they were appreciative of the project's business open signs but that other businesses could use similar signs.

It was asked if the Broadway Bridge demolition video could be posted. The project team said that it would be posted.

Tim Dineen, a frequent attendee of CWG meetings, said he had video of the demolition he would share with the project as well.

Green Line Extension Project

It was commented that the demolition was fun for kids to watch. It was also commented that the police were very friendly.

There was an inquiry if there were plans to pull the police details back as they no longer seemed as necessary. The project team said that the details were still out there but that they would be reevaluating the need for details at various locations with the Police Department.

Another member said they were getting community feedback that there were more police details than needed.

A concern was raised about riders reporting that the #8 bus has been consistently late by 20-30 minutes.

Washington Street Bridge

It was asked when the best time would be to watch the demolition. GLXC said April 9 during daylight hours would most likely be the best time.

There was a question concerning the piers of the bridge and how the staging would be planned. The project team said the demolition had been carefully and calculated what elements of the bridge will need to remain in place to maintain rail traffic during construction.

Building Demolitions

It was asked if there was an estimated time for the Homan's demolition. The project team said it would be during daylight hours Saturday and Sunday, April 6 and 7.

There was an inquiry as to the camera was still posted. The project team said it is recording the demolition and images would be shared (though not in real time).

It was commented by a member that people in his area want a clear picture of all the closures including Medford Street and School Street as well. The project said they would provide this to the member.

Walls

It was asked what side of the GLX corridor the Community Path was on. The project Team said it was on the west / south side of the corridor.

There was interest in how the various sound wall locations were chosen or what the sound reduction factor means. The GLX team said that there are reflective and absorptive treatments available for sound walls and that all GLX sound walls have absorptive treatments. A 0.7 reduction factor means 70% of noise is absorbed – this was the minimum requirement. GLX sound walls range from an absorption factor of around 0.9 to 1.0.

There was a question about how decibel ratings were determined and how effective they would be decreasing noise. The GLX team said there would be a sound presentation planned for the next GLX CWG meeting.

Green Line Extension Project

A member asked if the material is known for the sound walls. The GLX team showed an example on slide 24 of presentation and what it looked like facing the tracks – corrugated metal (with flat steel panel on back).

It was asked if the different walls are both steel and concrete walls. The GLX team said the sound walls are a steel shell with an absorptive substance inside.

It was inquired if the metal walls would be shiny. The project team said that they were more dull galvanized steel and not shiny or sun reflective.

A member said they would like to be able to see what the abutter side of the sound walls would look like (not shown in slide). The project said the abutter would see the beams and the flat galvanized metal (the corrugated side is the absorptive side).

There was a question as to factors like aging or weather that affect the absorptive quality of the sound walls. The project team said the walls have a 75 year design life.

There was a concern about graffiti on the sound walls. The GLX team said that the steel walls would be easier to wash than concrete with power-washers.

In response to a member's inquiry, a slide was shown that showed where sound walls would be located.

It was asked if the end of the sound walls taper off or cut straight down. The GLX team said they cut straight down.

In response to a question if there were examples that the team could refer to that were similar sound walls, the project team noted that the interface one sees on I-93 is similar to how the GLX sound walls are designed, but that it was the material between the interface/framing that was different.

It was asked if this sound wall design with steel was new for MBTA because concrete is usually seen (e.g. the current wall at Granville Avenue). After some discussion, the project team said they would have to look at Granville wall again, but the design was traditional.

It was asked about the Granville area sound wall and how neighbors are inquiring about how the wall will look and what the aesthetics would be. The project team said it would be gray in color but that the tone of gray may change across corridor.

There was an inquiry as to whether there would be a sound wall in the Gilman Square area between School Street and Medford Street on the east side of the corridor. The project responded that there is not a wall planned, and that the City is still deciding what to do with this Transit Oriented Development property.

It was asked how the project determines the height of each wall. The project team explained that the design of each wall is to mitigate noise from the project. Height is determined by where each wall sits in relation to the track and where the abutting home is. Generally speaking, and subject to variation depending on location, the wall height would not allow one to be able to see the top of a locomotive from the ground 5.5 feet from the back of a house.

Green Line Extension Project

It was asked if there would be a different experience in relation to noise mitigated by the sound wall from the second floor of a house/apartment. The project team said they would go into further detail at next meeting's sound presentation.

Project Cameras

It was asked if there was a plan to have cameras on location for the station construction as well. The project team said they plan to have cameras at the station sites.

AFC 2.0

It was asked if the operating/payment system was similar to the parking system in Medford. The MBTA said it was the same company.

There was a question as to whether AFC 2.0 would be up and running before GLX opening. The MBTA said it would not be up beforehand but along a similar timeline. This could mean the GLX stations would have current vending machines that would then need to be swapped out.

It was inquired if people can still get monthly passes through employers with new system. MBTA said it will have the same functionality through employer but not sure what it will look like yet.

It was asked how people without smart phones or credit cards would pay fare. The MBTA said fares could be purchased at the machines or retail outlets with cash.

It was asked what percentage of bus stops the machines would be located at. MBTA said the system is designed so a customer would never have to go more than 2000 ft. to find a place to buy fare.

It was inquired what the incentive was for stores to sell tickets. The MBTA said incentive would be to have people come into store where they might then buy products.

It was commented by MBTA that Cubic (the contractor for AFC 2.0) has to reevaluate the system every year and make changes if aspects of the system aren't meeting the needs of the MBTA and customers.

It was asked how it would work if AFC 2.0 is not ready when GLX opened because there are no fare gates at stations. The project team said customers would submit their fare on the train as they do at outside stations on the Green Line currently.

It was asked if more than one store in a location would be able to sell fares. The MBTA said yes, and it would be up to Cubic to negotiate with the stores.

It was inquired if there would still be paper tickets or just the plastic card. The MBTA said right now they are just looking at plastic card but evaluating if there could be a need for one time travelers like tourists to have a one-time paper ticket.

It was questioned if the old fare vending machines need to be installed temporarily would they need shelters from weather. The MBTA said they are still evaluating how they would need to implement an interim system, and the project team said they would be starting to look at these issues with operations as they start getting closer to opening GLX.

Other issues

Green Line Extension Project

It was asked when the demolition of the Boston Avenue gates/buildings at Ball Square would happen. The GLX team said they would begin as soon as Homan's Building was done (about 2-3 weeks down the line).

It was followed-up asking if a week advance notification could be given before this demolition. The project team said letters had been sent to homeowners already and that they would be out on both sides of Boston Ave and the radius letting neighbors know.

It was inquired if this demolition would be on a weekend, if Boston Avenue would be closed the whole time, and if businesses would be notified. The project team said that there may be a day or so where they would need to close Boston Avenue.

It was asked when the next updated drawings for stations would be presented. The project team said that they would schedule another open-house public meeting when the updated drawings were ready to be shared.

It was asked by a member who co-maintains the unofficial GLX Facebook page that the group send over any information/photos/news they would like to see posted.

It was inquired if the Driscoll Electric wall would be physically attached to the building. The project team responded that no, the wall would not be attached.

Next meeting May 7, 2019 at GLX Project Office at 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville.