

GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT
December 3, 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: December 3, 2019, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.,

ATTENDANCE:

CWG Members: Viola Augustin (Somerville), Joseph Barr (Cambridge), Elliott Bradshaw (East Somerville - Brickbottom), Jim McGinnis (Union Square), Ryan Dunn (Magoun Sq.), Jim Silva (Medford - Ball Square), Jim McGinnis (Union Square), Jason Alves (East Cambridge), Laurel Ruma (Medford)

MassDOT/MBTA: Terry McCarthy (MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement)

GLX Project Team: Randy Henke, Martin Nee, and Jeff Wagner

Other Attendees: Tim Dineen (VNA resident)

PRESENTATION:

Terry McCarthy opened the meeting and welcomed the group. Prior to beginning the presentation, a discussion on nighttime noise was initiated by J. Silva. The concern was whether activities prohibited after 10:00 p.m. were ceasing on-time. Jeff Wagner explained he had already had discussions with high-level construction managers and it was agreed all prohibited activities would cease at 10:00 p.m. sharp going forward. After that time, lagging for supportive excavation would be allowed, but no impact hammering. On a positive note, Jeff explained the hoe ramming activity for the 60-inch drainage pipe between Gilman Square and Magoun Square would be complete in the next week or so. This, he felt would result in a noticeable improvement in nighttime noise activity for the near future.

Terry McCarthy noted this was the CWG's 25 consecutive monthly meeting and provided the group with a review of 2019 activities. He noted considerable progress along the entire extent of the project limits. Particular highlights of progress included, bridge work, noise walls, utilities, track work, viaducts, the Vehicle Maintenance Facility, and preliminary station work at Lechmere Station. Terry also mentioned that steel fabrication has begun for the girders to span the Broadway Bridge.

Discussion continued over the nighttime noise impacts of various operations. The GLX team explained in general, as the project activities shift from underground activities—particularly as they get away from deep, underground utility work which often entail unknown soil conditions—residents should begin to see an increase in the pace of work in specific areas. There is a general sense that above-ground work will move more quickly along the alignment (than, for example, the 60-Inch drainage line between School and Sycamore Streets) and therefore, the duration of noisy activities in specific areas may pass individual residences more quickly.

A question was asked if the noise at Ball Square would get worse. Terry made it clear there would always be the hum of construction along the alignment. He explained that concrete form work and placement of concrete is generally quieter than hoe ramming, but there is still a considerable amount of demo work ahead of us with the Lechmere Viaduct, etc., and it is too soon to predict what nighttime noise levels will be in certain areas.

A question was asked about the phasing of the Broadway Bridge. Randy Henke explained how Phase I is ready for the tracks to be relocated onto the new bridge. Phase II involves demolishing the last remaining section of the bridge (currently in use). Once the track shift takes place that demo will start and the remaining portion of the bridge will be constructed with an expected completion in Spring of 2020.

Jeff Wagner followed Terry's comments with a detailed construction update. His presentation included specifics on:

- Worker Safety
- Upcoming permanent relocation of the commuter rail / freight track on the west/north side of the New Hampshire Main Line alignment.
 - North of College Ave
 - Washington Street to Sycamore Street
 - Sycamore to Harvard Street
- Foundation progress and retaining wall work at the Vehicle Maintenance Facility
- Steel placement at Lechmere and Fitchburg viaducts and Lechmere Station
- Preliminary station work at Union Square
- Foundation drilling between the MBTA Boston Engine Terminal and Water Street
- Actively pouring concrete columns and pier caps for viaducts and the Community Path near Brickbottom
- Deck construction and concrete placement on viaducts along the Fitchburg Viaduct
- Completion of a temporary fire truck outpost near Washington Street and New Washington Street
- GLX Hotline and response to comments/requests topped 965 Inquiries in November with 894 issues closed out to-date
- The GLX Community Connections Team donated more than 700 pounds of food to the Somerville Homeless Commission

Questions were asked about the scheduling noise panel installations. Jeff stated the exact timing was under discussion with GLXC and would be the subject of a future meeting. The life expectancy of the proposed panels has not been approved yet. Tests are being conducted to make sure the panels will meet MBTA quality requirements for corrosion and longevity.

In the meantime, it was stated that the track shift of the commuter rail into its permanent location is the main priority now and steel and decking on the viaducts will continue throughout the winter.

A concern was raised about trees determined by neighbors to be unstable at the northern limit of the project near Winthrop Street Bridge in Medford. Terry reported that he is working with Keolis on the issue and would keep residents informed of progress. He suggested that residents might want to track the issue through the MBTA email complaint process available at www.mbta.com.

The conversation shifted back to the Lechmere Viaduct demolition and bus diversions to and from North Station for approximately one year beginning Spring 2020. It was agreed there should be a public meeting scheduled in East Cambridge as soon as the commencement date for the demo is known.

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Next Community Working Group meeting January 7, 2020 at 8:30 to 10:00 a.m., at the GLX Project Office at 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville.