

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT  
DECEMBER 4, 2018 COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING – SUMMARY MINUTES**

LOCATION OF MEETING: GLX Project Office, 200 Inner Belt Rd, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Somerville, MA 02143  
DATE/TIME OF MEETING: December 4, 2018; 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

**ATTENDANCE:**

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

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

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

GLX Project Team: Randy Henke, Martin Nee, Joe Sgroi, Nicholas Torello

Other Attendees: Todd Blake (City of Medford), Tim Dineen (VNA resident), Erica Mace (City of Somerville), Tim McGivern (City of Medford), Lynn Weissman (Friends of the Community Path)

**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 GLX Deputy Program Manager for Stakeholder Engagement, gave introductions for the meeting and per request by the members conducted a roll call of members present (see above) as well letting others in the room introduce themselves. Terry stated that GLX Program Manager John Dalton had requested that this CWG meeting be dedicated to station designs.

John West, Project Manager for GLX Constructors (GLXC), gave an update on current station designs for all GLX stations. It was clarified that these are conceptual designs for discussion purposes and are subject to change.

- Lechmere (see presentation slides 4-10)
  - Goal for completion of RFC (referred for construction) level of design plans is middle of March 2019.
  - Lechmere is the only GLX station with a double canopy.
  - New station is north of existing Lechmere Station
- Union Square (slide 11)

## Green Line Extension Project

- RFC set for May of 2019
- East Somerville (slide 12)
  - Goal for RFC is for July 2019
  - Work on Washington Street Bridge slated for spring of 2019
- Gilman Square (slides 13-16)
  - RFC is planned for late January 2019
- Magoun Square (slides 17-18)
  - RFC planned for 2019
  - Plans to provide egress from safe dispersal area are in progress
- Ball Square (slide 19)
  - RFC planned for May 2019
- College Avenue
  - RFC planned for March 2019

John West also gave a construction update including:

- Safety – All Hands Meeting (with community first responders) Nov.29
- Demolition update
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to start following utility isolation
  - Homans Building hazardous material abatement underway with demolition in early 2019
  - Ball Square – hazardous material abatement to start in December with demolition in early 2019
- Vibration monitoring (see slide 28) – done in advance of demolition
- Separation barrier (see slide 29)
- Drainage Work at Rogers Foam
  - 60-inch concrete pipe
  - finding a lot of hard rock to get through
- Walls (see slide 31)
  - Existing walls conflict with permanent wall so extracting old wall and putting in new
  - working with property owners, local/elected officials
  - temporary fencing should be in by Friday
- Pre-Construction Survey – started on east side of alignment a few months ago, starting reaching out to properties on west side now
- Also gave pest management, trash removal, and bridge construction schedule updates (slides 33-36)

Jeff Wagner, Public Outreach for GLX Constructors (GLXC), gave an update on community outreach which included the formation of a Community Connection Team that has:

- Collected about 450 lbs. of food for the Thanksgiving food drive. The collections were donated to the Somerville Homeless Coalition's Project Soup; The team is looking to do the same for Christmas
- Also connecting with the Medford Family Network as well during the holidays
- The team is also working with Cambridge Youth on Fire

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ISSUES:

### Roll Call

It was requested by a member that a CWG member roll call be taken at the beginning of every meeting and that agendas for the meeting be distributed prior to the meetings so members can come prepared.

It was also asked if the Lechmere Station neighborhood had member representation at these meetings. The GLX team clarified that the Mayor of Cambridge had selected members that were both city workers and residents and that Tegin Teich and Andy Reker have been providing representation for Cambridge/Lechmere at a number of the CWG meetings.

#### Lechmere Station Designs

Asked for clarification on presentation slide 4, GLXC stated that Boston and Science Park Station would be off to the left of the drawing and that what was shown was the north headhouse of the station.

Responding to a question about how pedestrians would enter the station, GLXC said there is a south headhouse on East Street and a north headhouse on North First Street.

It was asked which headhouse was the primary entrance for Cambridge Crossing. GLXC said that the busway would be nearer to the north headhouse and would probably be the entrance that would be used.

It was asked how the buses coming from Somerville would go to get to the bus loop. The GLX team said it would turn on Water Street.

The GLX team confirmed for a member that North First Street was just built a couple of weeks ago.

The GLX team clarified that the dotted lines on slide 9 represent the viaduct.

It was asked if bus transfers at the Station would be changed. The GLX team said that there are 4 different berths for buses on the bus loop for the 4 buses that currently service Lechmere, but future plans have yet to be determined.

A member noted concern among ridership about any reduction in bus service at the station.

A member said they felt the current management of the pedestrian flow outside Lechmere Station is concerning.

The project team noted that the bus schedules are under review by the MBTA Better Bus Program and Service Management and that they may make adjustments depending on underserved or overserved areas, but there would be a process.

A member noted that the plans show a curbed sidewalk at the new Lechmere busway which is an improvement over the current station and may help with pedestrian management.

A member expressed concern about the amount of space offered for the number of passengers coming off the trains heading to buses. Another member noted the plans show a different configuration than a prior version where pedestrians would cross the tracks and drop off on the other side. A few years ago the change was made.

Members noted there is an intense pressure for a more pedestrian friendly experience entering the general vicinity of the station, beyond the scope of GLX.

For example, crossing O'Brien Highway is considered a major pedestrian issue.

## Green Line Extension Project

The GLX team said the project focus has always been on pedestrian access to the stations, with no parking offered as part of project.

A member said that the GLX team needs to prove its commitment to putting pedestrians first by more than just having crosswalks.

It was commented that there is a possible problem with cars stopping on Highway 28 – especially rideshare services to drop passengers off.

A member commented that trees shown on station drawings are ambitious and should be more realistic if they are going to be shared with public. The GLX team clarified that these drawings do not represent the final landscaping plans for the project.

It was asked if designated drop-off zones were part of the design, because if they are not offered, people are going to improvise. The GLX team said there are drop-off areas only in a small capacity (e.g., The Ride) because the MBTA does not want to encourage the practice and that it will be a learning experience when the station opens.

The group requested that drop-off and ride-share data and projections be produced, analyzed, and shared with members for all stations.

A member suggested working with the City of Cambridge, Medford and Somerville on issues that will be bordering the stations. It was mentioned that Davis Square has a drop-off area for rideshares because planners were proactive. The group was reminded that areas beyond the stations themselves are beyond the scope of the GLX project.

The GLX team noted that the Northpoint developer will be responsible for redeveloping the O'Brien Highway and the City of Cambridge is working with them and have raised these issues/questions.

The members wanted to make sure it was noted that they are raising the issue about ride-share drop-offs so that the City of Cambridge, City of Somerville, and City of Medford will know that this is a concern.

A member stated that they have to live in these communities and if they are dedicating themselves to 3 years of this project, they will be held accountable when the stations are complete and therefore, they need to document that issues were raised and brought up at the time. They are doing their due diligence to make sure the questions are asked and recorded.

The City of Cambridge asked a question about the bus shelters at Lechmere because they look different than what the city is used to seeing. GLXC said the shelters are more like windscreens than the bigger, heated versions seen on the Silver Line.

Cambridge also inquired about pedestrians getting by the shelters and if there was adequate room on sidewalk. Cambridge said they are going through a process of re-envisioning bus berths at Central Square and one issue they are hearing comments about from passengers is that bus stops feel very pinched due to the number of people even when sidewalk is 10-foot wide.

## Green Line Extension Project

A member commented that it is really important to figure out pedestrian volumes at Lechmere. The GLX team said to keep in mind that a lot of people that currently exit and enter at Lechmere aren't going to be there because they will continue on the Green Line into Somerville and Medford – it won't be the terminus station once GLX is built.

There was a question about a crosswalk for getting from the bike cage to the headhouse. The GLX team said there would be one. The team also said conversations are ongoing with the city on where the bike cage would be located.

A member asked about the north headhouse entrance and if people coming from the highway side would have to walk around the station to enter (see slide 9). The GLX team confirmed this will be the case.

A question was asked concerning the kind of infrastructure that could be expected for people wanting access to the mall. The GLX Team said that infrastructure was being developed by the DIVCO developer and the City of Cambridge, not GLX.

A member noted that a majority of the Lechmere Station users were from East Cambridge on the other side of the O'Brien Highway from the new station and that the safe pedestrian crossings have been raised as an issue.

### Union Square Station Design

A member noted that except for Lechmere, all the stations are 3 car platforms. It was asked what the longer skinny portion of the platform level (on left side of drawing) was for. The GLX team said it allows for 2 cars to be stored past the platform for staging at the beginning of the service day or for storage of a disabled train.

It was asked if the station entrance on the left of the drawing was going up to the bridge on Prospect Street. The GLX team said this is currently under discussion and the Union Square developer US2 has some preliminary designs ideas.

A member noted that some of the station area and components are being designed by the private developer US2. There is a lot of public discussion about the designs including interest raised about better pedestrian access from the Boyton Yards and the south side. One problem is the bridge, as constructed, is too steep and does not meet ADA and to fix would be cost prohibitive.

### East Somerville Station Design

It was asked if this station was behind Cataldo Ambulance. The GLX Team clarified that Cataldo was on Washington Street which is just to the left of the drawing.

There was a question as to why the station entrance wasn't on Washington Street (left side of drawing) and was so far from the street. The GLX team said that the access path show on the drawing needs to ramp up to station.

It was asked if stairs could be at Washington side in addition to ramp. The GLX team said that this would not comply with the equal access policy for ADA compliant access.

It was asked if the access path would be a maintained sidewalk and if it was different from the Community Path or if they merge. The GLX team said the two paths merge at the station

entrance and that they would check with MBTA operations about how the maintenance of the path will work.

A comment focused on where the access path merges with the Community Path. Concern was noted about bicycles flying by.

It was noted that an earlier design had an elevator and entrance at Washington Street. The GLX team said that the earlier design was very complicated and cost prohibitive.

It was noted by a member that there would most likely be signage on the path alerting bicyclist about the pedestrian crossing, and vice versa. The GLX team said there would be signage.

It was noted that the Ride drop-off at this station was eliminated.

It was asked if the 91 and 86 bus stops nearby would be moved to make more of a connection. The GLX team said bus scheduling and stop locations were still being determined.

A member noted it would be interesting to see the station drawings expanded to include Washington Street for neighborhood context as the station entrance is so far away.

It was asked if there would be access from Joy Street and would there be a fence. GLXC confirmed there would be no access from Joy Street and the area would be fenced off.

It was asked what was meant by the future platform extension in the drawing. The GLX team explained the platform was currently designed for 3 car trains but the design does not preclude a 4-car train in the future.

It was asked if the closure for the Washington Street Bridge had been updated. GLXC said that right now they were shooting for roughly March/April 2019 (similar to what was said before).

It was asked if there were any further details on traffic detours for the bridge closures. GLXC said the detours presented had not changed.

#### Gilman Square Station Designs

It was noted by a member that none of the trees shown in the drawing (slide 13) currently exist and therefore should not be included if in the drawing. GLXC said its design does not reach beyond the Community Path but that the concern was understood.

It was noted that the bike storage and substation had moved.

It was asked if the substation made a lot of noise. The GLX team said one might experience a very minimal hum of transformers from right up close, but all the rest of the equipment is enclosed.

It was asked if there was a School Street connection to the Community Path. The GLX team showed the connection on slide 16 drawing.

It was asked when construction on station would begin. GLXC said they may be doing some preliminary work in 2019 but would begin in earnest by early 2020.

## Green Line Extension Project

It was asked if the drawing on slide 16 represented the new High School footprint. GLXC said that it wasn't exact and there had been some changes in the background drawing.

It was asked what the scale of the transformer was as compared to the station. GLXC said the transformer building will be about 80 feet long versus the platforms which are 225 feet in length.

There was some discussion as to where the Traction Power Substation would be. The GLX Team said it was still under discussion but would be in the general area shown.

### Magoun Square Station

It was noted by a member that a development project is slated to begin in the area where GLXC is providing access to the station's safe dispersal area. It was further noted that the Maxwell's Green Condo Association (separate from the Maxwell's Green development) has no interest in having an access point on their property. The GLX team said the MBTA Real Estate department would have to reach out on any sort of access deal.

It was asked what the elevated walkway is that is shown in the drawing on slide 18. The GLX team explained that one would enter the station from the Lowell Street Bridge and travel down the walkway to where they would access stairs and/or elevator to get to platform. The walkway provides the distance necessary to get the trains under the bridge and to meet the platform.

It was commented that the Community Path looked like it was a variable width at this station. The GLX team explained that the Community Path was not at this station; the GLX portion stops at Lowell Street and does not connect to the station.

It was asked if there were numbers for how many bike spaces were at each station. The GLX team said that the numbers provided for are the same as what was stated in the Environmental Assessment.

It was asked if the station could be on the other side of Lowell Street (to connect with Community Path) but the GLX Team said it had been looked at but didn't work.

### Ball Square Station Designs

It was asked if there was only one elevator at the station because of the egress on the street level. The team confirmed this.

It was asked if at the Boston Avenue station access entrance users would be crossing the tracks at track level. The team confirmed this to be the case.

There was a question as to what was happening with the MBTA left-over property where station access runs through from Boston Ave. The GLX team said the MBTA owns the land but once GLX is complete, it would offer the property up for development with the condition that access to the station is maintained. Currently it will be used for a construction lay down area and track access.

It was asked what decibel level is expected for the traction power substation. The GLX team said it wouldn't make any noise and that it is all enclosed except for two transformers that may emit have a very light hum.

## Green Line Extension Project

Asked about the future TOD labeled on the drawing (slide 19), the GLX team said the MBTA real estate and transit-oriented development (TOD) team would work to sell the property when GLX was complete.

Asked what the "Hrail Access Pad" labeled on the drawing was, the GLX team said this was for maintenance.

A question was raised about whether a future platform extension would interfere with the emergency access from the station to Boston Avenue next to the apartment buildings. The GLX team said a design for that scenario would have to be looked at.

It was clarified that the station access entrance from Boston Avenue would cross the tracks at grade and it would be right at where the train stops allowing for a safe pedestrian crossing.

It was asked if the sidewalk where the station access is on Boston Avenue was a normal width sidewalk. The team said when that sidewalk is rebuilt it will need to be kept ADA accessible (estimated around 6 feet). Further clarification about the station sidewalk on Broadway estimated that it would be around 8 feet wide.

It was asked where buses or a drop off would be and if they would be at the top of the bridge. The GLX team was not sure about busing but believed it would still stop where it does today.

There was a concern about sidewalks becoming pinch points due to obstacles that would be installed (lights, crosswalk signals, etc.). It was suggested, if there was room to widen the sidewalks at entrances, it would help with pedestrian flow.

There was a question as to how bikes would use the roadway or if they would have shared access with the sidewalk. The GLX team said that Broadway has new bike lanes.

It was asked when the demolition was set for the current building in Ball Square. GLXC said right now it is set for first quarter of 2019.

It was asked if the bike numbers at the stations could be posted to make sure there are enough spaces allocated, as there was concern about capacity in the Tufts area.

It was asked if the TOD property would have to be 2 separate parcels because of the path in between. The GLX team said designs are still being developed so it is not yet known what size the property will be when it is put out for bid by the MBTA.

It was inquired if the hatched box at the bottom right of the station on the drawing (slide 23) was landscaping. The team said it was a bicycle rack.

A member gave an update on what some of the Tufts development plans were including an aquatics center and a new 5-story academic building; also, the skybridge idea over Boston Avenue has been cancelled.

There was a question as to how to get to the station platform and the entrance was shown on the drawings.



## Green Line Extension Project

It was clarified by the GLX team that the drop-off shown for the station is only for The Ride and not for rideshare drop-offs. Concerns were raised about whether the MBTA needs to have an officer at the drop-off location to enforce traffic. The MBTA agreed to look into doing so.

A concern was mentioned that even with the generous width of sidewalk at the station entrance there are obstacles such as the bike cage and other elements in the area that could cause pinch points outside the station entrance.

It was asked if the RFC plans will have more detail. GLXC confirmed the pre-RFC plans will have more detail.

### Public meeting/public input on designs

It was inquired what percentage of design are these designs shown were at. GLXC gave some rough numbers that Preliminary Design is about 30%. Intermediate Design is 60%. Pre-RFC is 90%, and RFC is the last 10%. It was clarified that there is about one month to six weeks review between Pre-RFC and RFC.

It was noted by a member that many of these stations will be in Pre-RFC in the first quarter of 2019.

There was a question as to what the Ball Square Bridge (Broadway) closure date would be. GLX team said it was targeting mid-March. It was clarified that when the date is set firmly, the plan is to have the Public Meeting 4-6 weeks prior – so the public meeting date could be late January or early February.

A member noted that by January, half the stations would be in pre-RFC/RFC, which means stations will be 90-100% designed. This means the meetings will be more informational with less opportunity for input.

The project team clarified that the meeting would be for presenting information about what to expect from the project over the next years. The project will accept public comment, but it will not be an opportunity for the public to change the designs in significant ways. The next public meeting is being geared towards station designs, bridge closures, and traffic disruptions due to construction.

It was suggested by a member to have physical plans at the public meeting and allow the public to add post-it noted with ideas on the design. It was noted that this project is an investment of the public and shareholders ought to be able to have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

GLXC said it was not resistant to the idea of allowing public feedback, they just did not want to mislead public on what changes can be made. Members agreed that this should be made clear.

### Construction Updates

In response to a question from a member, GLXC clarified that vibration monitoring would be in advance of the demolition work and would not include vibration monitoring for railroad operations. The member noted that this would be important to make clear to public.

A member asked GLXC to clarify the three forms of notification to abutters for the pre-construction survey. The GLX team state they were (1) a door knocker notification (2) a certified letter, and (3) a final notification letter if the project does not receive a response.

## Green Line Extension Project

It was asked how far notifications would go from the tracks/construction on the west side of the alignment would get pre-construction survey notification. GLXC said the limit of notification was 100 feet from work site.

### Miscellaneous

The project was asked to:

1. Invite the MBTA Chief of Green Line Transformation Angel Pena to present to the CWG.
2. Provide a brief summary of any presentations delivered by the GLX Program Manager to the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board.

Next meeting January 8, 2019, 8:30 to 10:00 AM, at the GLX Project Office, 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville.