

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT
FEBRUARY 5, 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: February 5, 2019; 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

ATTENDANCE:

CWG Members: Joseph Barr (City of Cambridge), Elliot Bradshaw (Brickbottom), Frederick Dello Russo, Jr. (Medford City Council), Jennifer Dorsen (Somerville Ball Square), Ryan Dunn (Magoun Square), Dylan Manley (East Somerville), Andrew Reker (City of Cambridge/Lechmere), Laurel Ruma (College Ave), Jim Silva (Medford Ball Square)

MassDOT/MBTA: John Dalton – MBTA GLX Program Manager, Melissa Dullea – MBTA Senior Director of Service Planning

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

GLX Project Team: Randy Henke, Martin Nee, Jeff Santacroce, Joe Sgroi

Other Attendees: Viola Augustin (City of Somerville), Tim Dineen (VNA resident), Rocco DiRico (Tufts University), Brian Duran (Resident), Erica Mace (City of Somerville)

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:

Marty Nee, Outreach Coordinator for the GLX team, gave introductions for the meeting and went over the following:

- Thanked everyone for input, help and participating in the January 30 GLX Open House public meeting (slides 3-4) stating that the format for the meeting came from ideas from this group.
- Broadway Bridge Demolition (slide 5) – still targeting March 22 (6 weeks from Friday) and regional outreach plan will go into effect starting Monday next week.
- Washington Street Bridge Demolition (slide 6) – targeting April.
- Bridge Closure Regional Outreach (slide 7) – noted that largest part of outreach would be media relations which will be handled by the MBTA's seasoned press director which will

Green Line Extension Project

include an announcement to press over next two weeks to be followed up by another press push 2 weeks prior to closure.

- “Reboot Your Commute” 4-page brochure (slide 8) going out next week and will include maps of detours – goal is to get into the hands of as many people as possible.
- Bridge Closure Local Outreach (slide 9)
- 6 sandwich boards (slide 9) with detour information are currently out in front of local businesses and will continue to be placed in strategic locations over next 6 weeks.

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

- Safety (slide 12)
- Demolition update
 - 3rd Avenue (slide 13) – Old MS Walker Building demolition underway
 - Homans Building demolition (slide 14) will happen after 3rd Ave is done and will have a daily time-lapse camera that will be going up on pole near School Street bridge.
 - Ball Square (slide 15) will be after Homan’s Building and is trending for a March/April demolition
- MPM (slide 16) – one of the primary pieces of equipment for project corridor (including excavator) has arrived on site; will have a GLXC operator and a Keolis pilot as well
- Drainage Work at Rogers Foam (slide 17)
 - 60-inch concrete pipe
 - found a lot of hard rock which slowed things, but now moving along faster
- Walls (slides 18-19)
- In vicinity between Walnut and McGrath started one of first soldier pile wall – currently drilling about 4 holes a day (16-20 feet deep)
- Wall north of College Ave (slide 19) – shifted duct bank to allow for drilling; will now go in to start building temporary wire wall to allow for permanent wall
- GLX Project Community Connection Team (slide 20) – built bridge in Bolivia over the holidays working with locals

Marty Nee noted that CWG member Jim Silva had submitted a synopsis of comments that had been received on the stations by the community. The GLX team and CWG went over these concerns (see below).

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ISSUES:

Bridge Closures

It was asked if there is coordination with the casino for their opening in June and the traffic issues that could arise. The GLX team said that the ongoing regional outreach in the coming weeks will include communication with the casino. It was noted by a member that they believed the casino has a Director of Transportation already on board. The GLX team said they would reach out to the Casino in the next few weeks.

It was asked what form the regional outreach for the bridge closure would take – newspapers, detours, etc. The GLX team said they are finalizing the information/plan that will go into effect next week, the team then went over the plan during the meeting presentation (see slides 7-10).

Building Demolitions

There was a question as to when the Homan’s demolition would be starting. The GLX team said late February/early March.

It was asked if the time-lapse camera would be up on the GLX web page. The GLX team said it would not be live on the web page but that images from the camera would be shared regularly on the GLX Flickr account (which is linked on the web page).

Walls

On the topic of drilled-shafts for walls it was asked if the productivity would increase as the weather warms up. The GLX team responded that weather was a consideration but there were track access restrictions as well.

Broadway to Granville Avenue Area Work

It was asked what the work hours would be. The GLX team said it would probably be a 6-day work week (depending on track outages and foul-time availability) with hours typically being 6AM to 5PM or so depending on how much light is available for work. It was noted that there is better access to tracks on weekends and that the contractor has 25 weekends per year available to use per their contract and plan to make the most of these.

A member asked about the Granville Ave area construction timeline and whether the drainage work would precede wall construction. The GLX team said it would revisit the wall plan specifics but that residents should expect to see work in the coming weeks which will need to be finalized by the fall with regular activity straight through this period.

A member noted that this area will see a lot of activity because the Broadway Bridge demolition will be happening as well so people are curious about timeline.

In response to an inquiry, GLX team said it was safe to assume drainage work would take about 6 months.

The GLX team also noted they will be installing additional storage vaults south of Broadway Bridge for drainage and it was asked if this would be in both sides of the track. The GLX team said it would just be on east side of corridor. The GLX team said they would be buried fairly deep so once installed, observers won't know they are there.

The GLX team, in response to an inquiry, also clarified that the drainage pipe and sound wall is being installed from Broadway Bridge to Granville Avenue.

It was asked if wall materials had been determined yet. The GLX team said that by next meeting they would have more information.

A concern was raised that a resident on Woodbine Ave had said there were pre-construction surveyors approaching residents that had made them suspicious as to who they were and it was suggested that the project surveyors were GLX branded clothing to identify themselves as there are a lot of other developers in the area. GLXC agreed to recommend yellow vests for the PEER Consulting team in the field.

Review of Submitted Community Concerns about Stations

There was discussion by the members on their concern over unenclosed stations and the weather causing safety issues with the inclines and stairs and potential for ice and sliding especially for elderly. Concerns included covered stairs where snow, rain, and ice could enter

through the sides. The GLX team responded that the open-air station designs are similar to existing stations throughout the system.

Members asked if the station structures would support roofing and walls if they needed to be enhanced at some point for safety reasons. GLX responded the stations are designed to meet applicable codes, MBTA guidelines, and ADA requirements. Additional support for future roofing and walls is not part of the GLX scope.

It was noted by members that there are heavily sloped sidewalks around Ball Square and College Avenue and that they are maintained (by the city or Tufts) so during bad weather so that they are navigable. The GLX team said that the MBTA has a standard procedure for maintaining stations and sidewalks under its jurisdiction during inclement weather; it was pointed out that there are a number of open-air stations with inclined slopes on sidewalks in the surrounding area. It was suggested that the GLX team could bring in someone from MBTA maintenance to go over weather safety precautions at a later meeting.

It was asked if the surfaces of stairs and ramps at the stations would have a standard of slip resistance and if they were heated. The GLX team said they were not heated but that there was a standard in the performance specifications for stairs that could be found in the GLXC contract.

There was discussion of the separation barrier for the Commuter Rail and if a wall would be better at the platforms than the planned chain-link fence. Concerns included splash through during weather, noise, and the Commuter Rail diesel fumes. The GLX team said there is no plan for a wall at the station, and the design for a chain-link fence is the standard barrier for similar conditions throughout the system.

It was asked if Commuter Rail and freight trains have to slow down when passing through stations. It was also confirmed by the GLX team after another inquiry that someone on the edge of GLX platform would be approximately 16-18 feet away from the Commuter Rail. GLX responded that there are certain places where there are speed restrictions but speeds could reach 65-70 mph on separate tracks adjacent to stations in certain areas which is not uncommon throughout the Commuter Rail system.

On the issue of benches at the stations, the GLX team said there would be limited seating consistent with other MBTA stations.

It was noted by a member that some of the fare stations along the Riverside branch of Green Line are enclosed and heated. GLX team said they believe the heating aspects at certain stations are funded by advertisers, while the MBTA does not heat stations, the community could approach developers to explore future opportunities.

In response to the question about elevator capacity, the GLX team said the MBTA has specifications on elevators which are noted in the GLXC contract.

It was asked for the design to allow solar panels to be installed on roofs in the future to support sustainability. It was noted this is not part of the GLX project scope.

Members expressed frustration over the project not allowing big changes to designs outside of the specifications that were put into contract over a year ago and how any small changes would have to be cost and schedule neutral. The GLX team explained that the Design Build process begins defining the scope of the project approximately one year before the project is awarded. While it may seem frustrating to some that scope changes after the awarding of the contract are

Green Line Extension Project

generally cost prohibitive, members should keep in mind there was a great deal of public input and involvement prior to the procurement process. In addition, the project went to the unusual step of allowing major increases to the project scope by granting the 6 “Additive Options” which were based on input received from the public.

The 6 additive options are:

1. Station platform canopies
2. Redundant elevators at select stations
3. A project Art Program
4. Additional community connections to the Community Path
5. The Community Path extension from East Somerville Station to the Lechmere area
6. An enhanced Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF)

It was expressed by a member that Ball Square Station had a very bleak design with a park no longer part of plan, but that very small modifications could make it less bleak, safer and more comfortable for wide variety of people using station including elderly, small children and mobility impaired such as wall separating Commuter Rail/platform and landscaping. The GLX team stated that the stations will meet ADA requirements and maintenance requirements which are considered safe.

To the question about what fare system will be on board the GLX, the GLX team said that AFC 2.0 (being able to board the train/buses at any door with a fare card) will be coming on board the entire MBTA system right around the time when GLX is scheduled to open but it is possible there could be a gap of a few months – if this happens the MBTA will develop an interim fare process (similar to what is done now on Green Line), but there will not be any fare gates at these stations. There will be fare machines at stations and the ability to add money from phone. The GLX team said they can have people from AFC 2.0 team come to discuss at future meeting. It was also noted that the GLX team intends to have people from the Green Line revitalization team come in to talk to the group as well.

It was asked how the number of bike racks at each station was calculated, and the GLX team agreed to provide that information in the design drawings on the GLX website. It was further asked if bikes could be brought on to Green Line trains. The answer to this was no. Since this was the case it was expressed that it is all the more important to have adequate bike parking.

It was asked if after the stations are built, they do not meet the appropriate decibel levels would the MBTA make changes. The GLX team said that the design specifications meet the commitments that were established in the Environmental Assessment (EA) documents for the project going back in 2010. To accommodate track alignment changes, GLXC has developed a new baseline study so that sound mitigation required would be met in relation to any new changes. This information can be shared when complete. It was further explained that sound mitigation for projects is modeled before construction and designed according to regulatory guidelines. Once designed and constructed, further noise analysis is not revisited after project is built. MBTA has noise consultants that review and check contractor design to make sure they are meeting specifications and requirements. The GLX team agreed to dedicate a future meeting to noise mitigation with its noise consultant if the group desired.

It was asked if the MBTA is subject to OSHA requirements (in relation to amount of noise drivers can be exposed to). The GLX team said that yes, they are subject to OSHA noise regulations.

Green Line Extension Project

On the discussion of rideshare drop-off areas, The GLX team said there was a conscious decision based on studies of the area to make the GLX stations pedestrian oriented stations. While there are drop-off areas restricted for the MBTA's "The Ride" at terminus stations, there are not ride drop-off areas for the general public. This was a decision dating back to the early design of the previous GLX design and the decision was upheld in the current GLX design. Additional ride drop-off areas are beyond the scope of the project, but the project does not preclude future opportunities for cities to adopt such areas in their streetscape planning around the stations.

With regard to questions about art at the stations, the GLX team said it could have the MBTA manager in charge of art at stations at a future meeting if the committee desired.

In response to an inquiry over whether anything can be built at Boston Avenue entrance to Ball Square due to large Eversource power line that runs through area. The GLX team stated that structures can be built over the power line provided access to the line is coordinated with Eversource. There were further questions about how Ball Square real estate would be developed. The GLX team agreed host MBTA Real Estate at a future meeting if the committee desired.

There was an inquiry about the transformer/substation at the Boston Avenue entrance to Ball Square station and what it would look like. The GLX team said they were small and standard for MBTA and it should be referenced on plans shared with the committee.

It was noted how architectural renderings of trees on plans throw people off because they are not always accurate. The GLX team said that the message was heard and going forward they would not be included in new plans (some of the plans shared during meeting were done before the issue was raised).

It was asked if any business mitigation is being done to let people know that businesses will be open on detoured routes. The GLX team said that they have identified businesses that will be affected and are working with business community and local chambers of commerce to get information out in the coming weeks. Business outreach is a part of the GLX bridge closure plan.

It was asked if there was a plan for people who did not realize there would be a closure and have complaints to contact the project. The GLX team said they have a project email and hotline that are staffed and responded to for any questions or concerns. The team will also be doing robust outreach over coming weeks before closure to make sure everyone knows.

It was asked if the city plans to do a robo-call about the closure. The City of Somerville responded that they do plan to do a couple of calls.

Next meeting March 5, 2019 at GLX Project Office at 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville.