

**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT
MARCH 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: March 5, 2019; 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

ATTENDANCE:

CWG Members: Elliot Bradshaw (Brickbottom), Jennifer Dorsen (Somerville Ball Square), Dylan Manley (East Somerville), Jim McGinnis (Union Square), Brad Rawson (City of 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, Terry McCarthy – MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement

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

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

Other Attendees: Viola Augustin (City of Somerville), Christine Barber (State Representative), Patrick Baxter (City of Cambridge), Todd Blake (City of Medford), Mike Connolly (State Representative), Ben Ewen-Campen (Somerville resident), Tim Dineen (VNA resident), Pat Jehlen (State Senator), Denise Provost (State Representative), Todd Kaplan (GBLS), Joe Beckmann (Union Square Civic Advisory Committee), Mark Niedergang (Somerville Board of Aldermen), Ben Sisko (Lyft), Tim Talun (resident)

PURPOSE: The GLX Community Working Group (CWG) was formed to help engage and foster communication for construction impacts 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 let the group know that AFC 2.0 project representatives were supposed to present at this meeting but got called away, and it was the intention of the project to have them attend the next meeting.

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

- As per request of the CWG the consultant conducting the pre-construction surveys has been given clearly branded GLXC safety vests to let abutters know their work is GLX related.
- Demolition update
 - 3rd Avenue – Old MS Walker Building (20 3rd Ave) demolition is complete; building at 48 3rd Ave is about half complete to be finished by end of month
 - Homans Building demolition will happen after 3rd Ave is done and will begin most likely the week of March 18 or 25
 - Ball Square will be after Homan's Building (April)
- Commuter Rail track outages (slide 10) – just had one over recent weekend, more upcoming
- Multi-Purpose-Machine (MPM), (slide 12) – being used to bring material in and out of corridor
- Drainage Work at Rogers Foam (slide 13) is advancing
 - 60-inch concrete pipe
 - found a lot of hard rock which slowed things, but now moving along faster
- Walls (slides 14-17)
- Broadway Bridge closure scheduled for March 22, 2019.

TJ Steinberger, GLXC Structures Discipline Lead, gave presentation on the specifics of the Broadway Bridge construction process (see slides 20-31).

- GLX Project Community Connection Team (slide 20) – built bridge in Bolivia over the holidays working with locals

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ISSUES:

Building Demolitions

It was asked what the communications plan would be for shutting down the road for the Homans Building demolition. The GLX team said there has been outreach to the abutters by certified letter and there would be door hangers the week before. The Medford Street closure will be for just one weekend.

There was a question concerning signs on both ends of detour and where the detour would begin. The detour would begin at School St. and there would be proper signage.

It was asked if the Ball Square demolitions would require street closures and if the demolitions would be on weekends or weekdays. GLXC said there would be a closure but it was not determined when, though probably a weekend in late April.

It was mentioned that Harvard Street would be closed to truck traffic so crews would need an alternate route for hauling debris.

There was an inquiry as to how large an area would be notified for the Ball Square demolitions. GLXC stated they typically do a wide swath around the area (300 yards or so – including Titan Car Wash) keeping in mind who might hear the work being done or be affected by traffic.

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There was also a concern about dust and debris from the Ball Square demolition. The GLX team said they will be using dust suppression techniques and will definitely be out in advance to warn neighbors that this work is coming.

The City of Medford stated that the Traffic Management Plan for the Ball Square demolition should be submitted as early as possible for approval.

Issues outside GLX scope

City of Cambridge mentioned that advocates for the Community Path and Grand Junction Path have a developer interested in creating room for the intersection of the path and the city is interested in discussing more with the project. The GLX project said that plans would be reviewed and further discussion with the city can happen, but the issue will have to be looked at as separate from the GLX project scope.

A member wanted to make a list of these separate design items (like the Grand Junction Path connection). The list would be to keep track of the items because the people in the CWG, and those they represent, have a vested interest in what happens after GLX and feel these issues aren't yet being responded to. The project team said that many of these issues have to be looked at by MBTA separately from the project because the project does not have the answers presently and can't delay the project to investigate additional scope items.

A member said they should make a list separating which issues are GLX related and which ones are beyond the project that the MBTA will need to address.

It was asked if a recent idling commuter rail train on the tracks was related to current GLXC work. GLX team said the current work is not affecting commuter rail operations during the week, only on weekends when the rail was completely shut down to commuter rail traffic.

Walls

It was asked if the sound wall under construction at Walnut and McGrath is what can be expected for all other sound walls along the corridor. GLXC said this was more of a metal sound wall and it would be used for much of the track. When asked if it would be used for about 80% of the walls, GLXC said that would be a fair assumption.

A member noted that if this sound wall is what will predominately be along most of the corridor it would be good to have example of what it will look like. GLXC said they would bring a wall expert to the next meeting.

It was asked if the Broadway to Granville Ave work is for the drainage or the wall. GLXC said there is both drainage and wall work going on in this area but that the drainage design is being revised.

It was asked if work for the Broadway/Granville wall would still be 6AM to 6PM, 6 days a week, and what has been the notification for abutters. GLXC said they have met with most of the abutters and talked with them over a period of weeks. Flyering in the area has also been done. When asked if there is a date for construction that has been communicated, GLXC said residents have been told to expect work to start through the spring and continue through the year. It was also asked if the City of Medford will do robo-calls in area. The GLX team said it was a good suggestion.

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The City of Medford expressed concern over permit work for drainage. GLXC clarified that the drainage design was still being revised and the GLX team would be happy to discuss permits after meeting.

A member asked if drill work would start next week for the wall north of College Ave and if there would be notification of neighbors. GLXC said work would begin and neighbors would be notified.

It was noted that a wire was down from poles in corridor north of College due to snow. The GLX team said this was PTC fiber optic cable and the PTC project would fix.

Broadway Bridge closure

It was asked if March 22 closure date meant midnight or if commutes would be affected during the day that Friday. The GLX team said the idea was to have one day before the weekend to start closure in morning and then have a few days to work out any issues before Monday commute.

A concern was raised that the people (especially those at Ball Square) who are being diverted from bus stops need notification so they are not standing at the wrong stop on Friday. The GLX team said they are still awaiting approval from city on bus routes and temporary stops. Upon Medford's approval, they can begin notifying commuters. Signage and outreach plans being worked on by Bus Operations include signage at stops and MBTA alerts.

Broadway Bridge construction process

A member stated it would be helpful to also hear more about the station design since most people have an idea about why the bridge needs to close. They insisted that station design is where most concerns are coming from now. The Somerville Alderman for the area echoed these remarks saying that people that live in the area are no longer asking why the bridge needs to close but rather expressing station concerns.

The City of Somerville asked if the GLX team could let the city know if any bridge abutment work will happen on the street level rather than just the track level.

It was asked if this work would be done by machines hammering away at bridge from the street level. The GLX team said yes and added that track level would commence while the commuter rail was shut down on weekends.

It was asked by City of Somerville if materials during demolition of bridge would be hauled off at street level. GLXC said hauling materials will be a combination of street level and track through Homans Building lot.

There was a question if there would be pile driving or drilling. GLXC said because of the rock there will be drilling.

The City of Somerville inquired if the dialysis building would be affected. GLXC said the building has a wing wall that is attached to building. The wall is being left intact during initial excavation but will eventually come out. The first few weekends will affect the building the most, then vibrations are expected to subside – the team has been talking with the building owners. One of their main concerns has been building access during construction (which GLX will maintain).

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The City of Somerville commented that even if there was no GLX and bridge work, the City would still be working to redesign this terrible intersection at Ball Square to make it safer and more walkable.

It was inquired where the work zone fence for the bridge would begin on Broadway. GLXC said it would stand back from the bridge but would allow access to the dialysis building and commercial buildings on Boston Avenue.

Other issues

There was a concern raised by a resident of Union Square about who is making the decisions on the GLX team. The GLX team said many decisions were made when performance specifications were created going back approximately 2 years. These scoping decisions were provided to the design-build contractor who needs to comply with scope, but it is up to them to figure out how. This process, known as Design-Build offers the State cost certainty and allows construction to happen without delay. The GLX team said they know people have design concerns and the project will hear them but can't slow the project down to add additional scope. Adding costs now would not be responsible from a project delivery standpoint.

There was discussion about compliance when it comes to ADA concerns. An audience member stated that answering questions now is better and more cost efficient than getting sued for non-compliance later.

A member raised concern about the safety fence between the GLX track and the Commuter Rail/freight traffic. They pointed out people are standing 15 feet away from this rail traffic and questioned how safe this was from a noise and dust perspective. GLX responded by pointing out that similar situations exist throughout the entire MBTA commuter rail system.

A member asked if a roof could be added to the sidewalk entrance to Ball Square, and if not, could enough support be added to the structure to carry a future roof after GLX is constructed. The GLX team said that these stations are not being built to accommodate future roof structures beyond the station platforms and stairs (which will have roofs). Structural elements that are not part of scope would affect cost and schedule and therefore are not under consideration.

One member said the chain link fencing used at station entrances would project a "prison-like" environment. The GLX team said that the view of the station design is subjective and that the fencing elements in the design are identical to other stations throughout the entire MBTA system and meet the GLX design-build specifications.

Representative Provost asked who on the GLX team was making the calls about what is ADA compliant. GLXC said that ADA compliance is defined by statute. Repeated discussions take place during Technical Working Group sessions with designers and municipalities. Ultimately, the GLX Team said that MBTA Systemwide Accessibility provides comment and makes the final determinations.

It was asked if there was an internal project ADA consultant. GLXC said that the architects and engineers working on station designs are experts in their fields. They know the ADA code which is very specific in its requirements.

Next meeting April 2, 2019 at GLX Project Office at 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville.