

Green Line Extension (GLX) Community Working Group (CWG) Meeting
March 3, 2020
8:30 AM To 10:00 AM
200 Inner Belt Road, Somerville, MA

*This meeting is the 28th consecutive, monthly GLX Community Working Group meeting.

ATTENDEES:

CWG Members: John Attanucci (MIT – City of Cambridge), Viola Augustin (Somerville), Joseph Barr (Cambridge), Elliott Bradshaw (East Somerville - Brickbottom), Jim McGinnis (Union Square advocate), Andrew Reker (City of Cambridge), Jim Silva (Medford - Ball Square), Laurel Ruma (City of Medford), Justin Moeling (Gilman Square), Diana Souza (GLX MBTA Safety)

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

GLX Project Team: Martin Nee, Erin Reed, Amanda Smith and Jeff Wagner

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.

T. McCarthy welcomed everyone for attending and thanked them for taking the time out to attend the meeting. T. McCarthy reviewed the emergency evacuation path from this building for all of those in attendance. A large yellow sign marks the muster point in the GLX Offices parking lot. T. McCarthy asked everyone to look to their left and right and remember the person sitting next to each other in the event we need to meet at the muster point outside.

T. McCarthy reviewed the plan for the public meeting next week (March 10th at the Cambridge Community Center) and visited the venue.

R. McSherry said a lot of progress has been made throughout the corridor; progress photos were taken on February 18th and a good deal of work has been completed since. R. McSherry provided construction updates for the following areas:

- Union Square
- Lechmere Area
 - Closure of Lechmere Viaduct for demolition, reconstruction, and relocation is planned for May 2020
- BET Area (Red Bridge Traction Power Substation)
- Vehicle Maintenance Facility

- East Somerville Station
 - Washington Street Bridge is down; working to get back open in mid-May 2020
 - J. Wagner said there is video recorded by the crew using the MPM along the line; videos are documented each week with video. R. McSherry said videos like this help with contractors to identify where else they need to focus their efforts. T. McCarthy said the MBTA graphics team has the video and are working to enhance and highlight the stations along the line.
- Broadway Bridge:
 - Utilities will be put back on the bridge, design requirement
- Ball Square Station area
- Medford/Tufts Station Area
 - Aiming for end of April done to start construction on the station

GLXC provided an update on the Traction Power Substation. N. Peck explained the purposes of the traction power substations:

1. Provide distribution of DC power to trains (light rail vehicles)
2. Provide distribution of AC power to ancillary location across Green Line alignment (examples are stations, pump stations and central instrument houses)

Siva Ancha reviewed the locations of the substation buildings. The Red Bridge Traction Power Substation is at 10 Morgan Avenue. J. Wagner said it is across from Superior Nut. Siva said the building will be about 5000SF; 1-story with 2 transformers. T. McCarthy said these substations are primarily unmanned buildings but as other substations, will be tied into other substations for redundancy. Siva said the duct bank work is going on now and the foundation and form work will begin in a few weeks; total 6-8 months construction. J. Silva asked how much noise is generated by the substation; T. McCarthy said they generate little noise and would go unnoticed unless a person was standing right next to it trying to hear it. The building generates a very slight hum but no significant noise.

Ball Square Traction Power Substation will be accessed from Boston Avenue and will also be about 5000 SF with a similar configuration to the Red Bridge TPSS. Access to the Ball Square station will be located adjacent to the TPSS. J. Dorsen asked if a structure could be built above the substations; T. McCarthy said there are instances where stations are located within the same building but are not designed to structurally support additions. J. Dorsen asked about the location selection process for the TPSS buildings; L. Ruma said 5000 SF is larger than was anticipated; Siva said the size is because it is 1-story. J. Dorsen asked about the building height; Siva said it is about 19 feet.

The Pearl Street TPSS will be a 2-story building due to site constraints and will be accessed from Medford Street. J. Silva asked how tall the structure here will be; Siva said approximately 36 feet.

COMMUNITY ART UPDATE:

- Conceptual Artwork. T. McCarthy said the artists are those that were originally chosen from the start of the project and are still working on the respective stations.
 - o Ball Square Station – Artwork ties in artwork within the glass after approval from Accessibility Office. To maintain elevator design standards and codes, the glass will still be transparent. Artist is Christine Vaillancourt.
 - o Medford/Tufts Station – Artist is Nancy Selvage. The two glass panels to be lit from below and behind; called the Speeding Green Line. The two glass panels will be 2’ high and 42’ long. Tufts is also working to add art features near the crosswalks near the station; working with the neighbors.

- J. Silva asked about the status of including art from the community and suggested reaching out to the two schools. T. McCarthy said operations is working on including this down the road. J. Silva said an artist will still be involved and will support the students. J. Silva asked that Medford be included in the discussion about this when they begin.
- J. Dorsen asked who would be charged with adding art elements after the start of revenue service; T. McCarthy said it would still be this team and would be part of bringing the service online.
- J. Silva asked if the tracks are designed for an additional route; T. McCarthy said the Union Branch and Medford Branch now head to Lechmere and are not currently configured to divert down another line.
- T. McCarthy said the plan to reach out to schools and senior centers about train safety is being developed and will eventually be out in the public (likely in public meetings).
- J. Silva asked about the bus stop and bus lane at Lechmere; T. McCarthy said the bus stop, as of now, is still at Nashua Street (bump-and-go design) and the bus lane is undergoing design review against vehicle and pedestrian diversions. Agencies are about 2 weeks away from looking at this area in more detail.
- J. McGinnis asked about coordination with the draw bridges; M. Dullea said the USCG rules the draw bridge completely. T. McCarthy said as of July 1st, the control of the canals will be taken over by the USCG.

PUBLIC OUTREACH UPDATE:

- GLX Hotline and Response to Comments/Requests:
 - Continuing to reach out to the west side; getting to know the neighbors and stakeholders in this area.
 - Approximately 43 calls this month; 1,104 to date and 1,003 actions have been closed out.
 - J. Wagner said the neighbors have been great in the area and have been very cooperative to allow crews to get in to do the work.

T. McCarthy thanked everyone for coming and for taking the time to attend this month's community working group meeting. The Community Working Group meeting concluded at 9:56 AM.

NEXT MEETING: April 7, 2020, 4:00 PM, 200 Inner Belt Road, 3rd Floor, Somerville, 02143.