

**MBTA Green Line Extension (GLX) Project  
Community Working Group (CWG) Meeting Minutes  
February 2, 2021  
8:30 to 10:00 AM Via Webinar**

\*This meeting is the 39th consecutive, monthly GLX Community Working Group meeting.

**ATTENDEES:**

**Elected Officials:**

Representative Christine Barber

**CWG Members (in alphabetical order):**

Ryan Dunn (Co-Chair)

Viola Augustin (Somerville)

Joseph Barr (City of Cambridge)

Elliot Bradshaw (Brickbottom)

Rocco Dirico (Tufts University)

Jim McGinnis (Union Square)

Andrew Reker (City of Cambridge)

Laurel Ruma (Medford – College Ave)

Jim Silva (Medford - Ball Square)

Michaela Bogosh

**MassDOT/MBTA:**

Melissa Dullea (Senior Director MBTA Service and Planning)

Terry McCarthy (MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement)

Marggie Lackner (MBTA Deputy Chief, QA/QC)

**GLX Project Team:**

Martin Nee (GLX-Consultant)

Erin Reed (GLXC)

Jeff Wagner (GLXC)

Matt Davy (GLX-Consultant)

Richard Monahan (GLX-MBTA)

**Other Guests:**

Tim Dineen (VNA Resident)

Karen Breslawski

Gregory Jenkins

**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.

Terry McCarthy welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a safety moment on home emergency preparedness including having a fire extinguisher in your kitchen and planning escape routes and muster points in case of a fire. He proceeded to deliver the latest data on COVID-19 impacts at the MBTA. He then introduced Marggie Lackner, Deputy Chief of QA/QC at the MBTA who presented an update on the GLX Arts Program.

#### **Arts presentation: Marggie Lackner**

As the stations are different, so is the artwork different. Artists selected for the original design were engaged to work on the current project. The selection committee included representatives from the Cambridge, Somerville and Medford arts councils, as well as the architects and MBTA representatives.

The artists have stuck with the project through many years and many changes to develop their primary artwork. They have also generously provided designs for porcelain enamel panels on the platforms.

The GLX team has worked persistently to make this happen – not easy in a design-build situation. The MBTA Wayfinding Team has also helped to make not only the historic interpretive panels beautiful but has also lent their skills to make the artwork a reality. The following is a summary/status of each location.

#### **Lechmere Station Randal Thurston**

##### **Field Notes**

Ceramic printing on glass, and porcelain enamel panels

Inspired by the terrain that exists just beyond Lechmere Station, *Field Notes* takes its name from the practice of observation and reflection that naturalists use to understand the world. By taking and keeping records of the migratory patterns of birds, the river's ebb and flow, and the cyclical rhythms of flowers and trees, we develop both knowledge and memory of a place and its inhabitants.

These vignettes feature the flora and fauna found in North Point Park throughout the year. In the background are excerpts from the notebooks of William Brewster, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Ornithologist who spent his life studying the birds of Cambridge, Somerville and the surrounding area.

Randal's interest in creating artwork that incorporates nature comes from a sensibility that is very much like Brewster's. By paying attention to both wing and leaf, he gets a clearer sense and deeper understanding of his place in the world.

##### **Status**

Glass under construction, PE panels in fabrication

**Union Square Station**  
**Matt Trimble**

**Passage**

Station Entryway

Printed in GFRC with Steel Frame. Porcelain enamel panels that will provide photo-documentation of the 3-D printing process.

**Status**

Entryway in shop drawings – PE panels will be delayed.

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**East Somerville**  
**Nadir Tehrani**

**Domino Frame in Tension**

Stabilized aluminum foam, steel, and porcelain enamel panels

Located at the crossroads of pedestrian paths, a vehicular underpass, and the rail line, the Domino Frame in Tension serves as a landmark for the Somerville community and a way-finding device for the Green Line Station.

The change in scale and orientation from base to top make for a variety of readings from the many approaches to the structure: a flat billboard from one orientation and a needle pointing to the sky in another.

The installation inverts structural assumptions, delicately balancing the largest and heaviest element at the highest point, adopting tensile wires to maintain stability. Aluminum foam panels produce a lightness of material in direct contradiction with its assumed structural needs.

**Status**

Frame in shop drawings, and PE panels in fabrication

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**Magoun Square Station**  
**Aaron Stephan**

**Unfolding Light** - a series of solar-powered light fixtures

This artwork acts as a frame, allowing one to see the entirety of the site, its architecture, and community with fresh eyes. This act of renewed seeing is the point of departure for the installation. Train stations act as significant portals between community and travel. Unfolding Light celebrates this transition while anchoring your arrival and departure.

Each individual pole is bent in a way that results in a graceful and organic transition running the length of the ramp. Reminiscent of a tree canopy, or a light-filled tunnel, it marks your arrival and departure from Somerville with a welcoming and beautiful experience. In this way, it will both illuminate and create a visual anchor for Magoun Station and the surrounding communities.

**But A Name - Porcelain enamel panels**

It is inspired by the run-down remnant of a former paper manufacturing building adjacent to the site. It had become a unique training ground for local graffiti artists. The interior was layered with years of beautiful wall paintings created mostly for practice, and for other graffiti artists to appreciate. But A Name... is an imagined wall of tags by iconic artists like Frida Kahlo, Jasper Jones, and Lee Krasner.

As an art student in New York in the early 90's Aaron was immersed in beautiful, often fleeting street art that spoke directly to the community. This posed a dynamic contrast to the established cannon of artists he was learning about. While equally beautiful, they lacked the immediacy and brilliance of the graffiti. This work brings these two traditions together in a celebration of their shared ideals and exceptional impact on our daily lives.

**Status**

In shop drawings and fabrication

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**Ball Square Station  
Christine Vaillancourt****Tour Jeté Series**

Ceramic printing on glass, and porcelain enamel panels

Christine's inspiration for art at Ball Square Station came from the neighborhood's colorful shingled houses adorned with angular rooflines and railed porches. The result was a series of 45" x 90" paintings, *Tour Jeté I, II and III*, which provided the imagery for the elevator glass. The work illustrates her style of geometric abstraction with dancing motifs reminiscent of machinery, automation and movement. Two of the paintings are re-created in enamel on the train platform.

The transportation industry is part of Christine's family history. Two great-grandfathers designed or built horse-drawn carriages in Amesbury, MA, and her grandfather, father and uncle all designed automobiles and airplanes in Detroit. With her first public art project at Ball Square Station, she is delighted to continue her family's connection to transportation through her art.

**Status**

Both in fabrication

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**Tufts/Medford Station  
Nancy Selvage****Speeding Green Line**

Ceramic printing on glass

Located above the entrance to the station, this sculptural installation simulates the blurred visual effect of looking at a green landscape from a moving train. It is comprised of two parallel glass panels: each 2' high x 22' long, and spaced 3.75" apart.

It was inspired by the visual blur of foliage when viewed from a speeding train, the name of the “Green Line”, and the dearth of landscaping opportunities on the station “plaza”

Each layer of the 22’ long image has thin, transparent vertical lines replacing 40% of the solid image. As the viewer walks past and towards the layered panels, the image visually vibrates in a way that suggests horizontal motion.

### **Waggle Dance**

Porcelain enamel panels

Nancy Selvage has warped and collaged photographs of her perforated metal sculptures to create images suggestive of honeybees flying off to find food, foraging on flowers, returning home laden with supplies, and waggle dancing to let hive mates know where to find more. Locating these images on a train platform establishes relationships between honeybees and the local humans engaged in commuting, work, exploration, pollination, and community service.

### **Status**

In fabrication

### **Construction Update from Jeff Wagner:**

Jeff Wagner proceeded with a construction update. To highlight progress, he presented a video showing a side-by-side comparison of the alignment in 2016 versus 2021 (see video link).

### **Q&A:**

Representative Christine Barber asked why there were no details on Arts at the Gilman Square location. Terry McCarthy explained, Gilman Square is being handled differently. Working closely with the City of Somerville, GLX is facilitating the use of the Gilman Square Traction Power Substation façade for artwork rather than inside the station.

Andrew Reker asked if the artwork at Lechmere Station is incorporated in the elevator shafts. M. Lackner stated it will be at the elevators but not on the glass at the landing levels. This glass will remain clear for visibility purposes.

T. McCarthy thanked everyone for attending and for their continued input and feedback and adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR March 2, 2021, 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. via Video Conference.

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