

**MBTA Green Line Extension (GLX) Project
Community Working Group (CWG) Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2021
4:00 - 5:30 p.m., via Webinar**

*This meeting marked the 47th consecutive, monthly GLX Community Working Group meeting.

ATTENDEES:

CWG Members:

Jennifer Dorsen (Ball Square)
Joseph Barr (City of Cambridge)
Jim McGinnis (Union Square)
Andy Reker (City of Cambridge)
Jim Silva (Medford - Ball Square)
Ryan Dunn (Magoun Square)

MassDOT/MBTA:

Laura Brelsford (Assistant General Manager for MBTA System Wide Accessibility)
Terry McCarthy (MBTA Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement)

GLX Project Team:

Casey Berg (GLX Report Manager)
Erin Reed (GLXC)
Jeff Wagner (GLXC)

Other Guests:

Benjamin Sanders
Bob Mason
Bob Seay
Cullen
Laura Ruma
Mark
Michael
Michaela Boneva (DOT)
Nicholas Steiner
Nik DeCosta-Klipa
Reginald Fougy
Rocco DiRico (Tufts)
Sahsa Ray
Stefan Wuensch (MBTA Rider Oversight Committee)
Tim Dineen (VNA Resident)
Xavier Lopez

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 opening the meeting with the agenda and a safety moment. The topic was wellness - "If you don't make time for your wellness, you'll have to make time for your illness." He advised making time for annual check-ups and cancer screenings, taking PTO, keeping a healthy diet and exercise plan, etc.

Terry then provided a brief project update. He explained that the project is in a transitional period where heavy construction work will be coming to an end and testing and commissioning will be ramping up. He informed the group that the project has been working to install track and OCS wiring, and power will be on soon with testing to follow on Branch One (Union Branch).

Terry noted that the School Street Bridge is now open for emergency vehicles and pedestrians only and will open to vehicle traffic in the next few weeks. The Medford Street Bridge is expected to open late fall. He said there will be intermittent closures of these bridges going forward for utility and joint reconstruction work, but at least one bridge will be open at any given time.

Terry informed the group that the project is now training first responders at the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF). Firefighters from Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford are being trained. He showed pictures of the new Green Line vehicles inside the VMF and some of the equipment that will be used on the vehicles. He also noted that the project is currently completing punch list items within the VMF.

Andy Reker asked when the Green Line trains will start running on the new track. Terry said this would be a two-phased effort. First, the project should be getting Eversource power to the Red Bridge Traction Power Substation very shortly. Then, testing of the Substation will begin, and the project will have the Green Line vehicles running on the new VMF yard, and the Union Branch line. Testing and pre-revenue training demonstration that mimics revenue service will occur before revenue service. Pre-revenue demonstration starts at the beginning of service at 5AM and then concludes at 1AM to mimic day-to-day operations.

It was asked if the shuttle service will continue between Lechmere and North Station before revenue service. Terry McCarthy confirmed and said the project will not phase out shuttle service until the Union Branch is up and running. When Lechmere opens, the bus loop will open too, and the MBTA can discontinue use of the old Lechmere bus station.

Terry noted that the MBTA has decided to utilize the Microsoft Teams format going forward for internal meetings, and Zoom will be used for public meetings. GoToMeeting is being phased out, and a new Zoom invite will be distributed for the next Community Working Group meeting.

After these questions, Terry McCarthy transitioned the meeting to Zoom and gave the floor to Laura Brelsford, Assistant General Manager for MBTA System Wide Accessibility (SWA). Her presentation topic was, "Access in Motion: Driving Inclusion at the MBTA." She provided an overview of the history of the MBTA SWA department and its role. She said the department develops design standards, oversees an

internal access monitoring program, reviews rider complaints about accessibility, is responsible for compliance with ADA, and more. She noted the MBTA has seen a dramatic improvement in addressing accessibility issues since the department was formed. She also informed the group that new vehicle designs are much more accessible and elevators in the stations are more reliable. Going forward, the SWA is working to make all stations accessible and developing new innovative ideas to improve accessibility and access.

Ryan Dunn asked Laura if she thinks Congress should pass a bill with funds for transit accessibility. Laura said that as the current infrastructure bill is being worked through the Senate, some senators are working to carve out money for public transit agencies to improve their accessibility.

It was asked how the monitors in the internal access monitoring program are placed within the MBTA system. Laura said they have a staff member who crafts assignments for the monitors with specific goals. They are currently doing heavy monitoring on the Red Line, but they mix it up every quarter. An attendee noted that the Red Line announcements are not working 60% of the time. Laura said they would take that feedback into consideration as assignments are created.

Andy Reker asked if there is anything specific on the Green Line Extension that is unique and innovative accessibility-wise that may not be found at another MBTA station or vehicle. Laura noted that the elevators are especially large and transparent and clean. She also said that the wayfinding is a lot more intuitive.

Erin Reed asked if they anticipate having any SWA transit ambassadors at the station to help riders navigate the new station upon opening. Laura said they are working to identify how many ambassadors are needed and where they are needed. Terry also confirmed there will be transit ambassadors and customer service agents to help riders.

Seeing no further questions, the meeting was adjourned.

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

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