

**Green Line Extension (GLX) Community Working Group (CWG) Meeting**  
**January 7, 2020**  
**8:30 AM To 10:00 AM**  
**200 Inner Belt Road, Somerville, MA**

\*This meeting is the 26<sup>th</sup> consecutive, monthly GLX Community Working Group meeting.

**ATTENDEES:**

CWG Members: Viola Augustin (Somerville), Joseph Barr (Cambridge), Michaela Bogosh (member at large), Elliott Bradshaw (East Somerville - Brickbottom), Rocco DiRico (Tufts), Jennifer Dorsen (Somerville - Ball Square), Mark Johnson (DivcoWest), Jim McGinnis (Union Square advocate), Andrew Reker (City of Cambridge), Jim Silva (Medford - Ball Square) and Laurel Ruma (Medford resident)

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

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

Other Attendees: Tim Dineen (VNA resident), Matt Hartman (Senator Jehlen's office)

**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 reviewed emergency procedures for those in attendance for the CWG meeting and emphasized extreme care when the parking lot is icy in the winter months.

T. McCarthy reviewed the upcoming Lechmere bus diversion plan and upcoming events. The next general public meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2020. T. McCarthy provided an update on the Broadway Bridge work and shared photos of the steel span fabrication installed recently. J. Dorsen asked about the probability of the bridge reopening as planned; T. McCarthy said there is no official date but still aiming for March 22, 2020 as the project may encounter obstructions. R. McSherry said they are constantly working to mitigate unforeseen delays. J. Dorsen asked if there is a penalty if the bridge does not open on time; T. McCarthy said there are timeline consequences but not for individual items. J. McGinnis asked for a firmer date for the reopening of the Washington Street bridge as he has been getting many questions about this. T. McCarthy said they are actively working to fine tune this schedule and will work to keep everyone up-to-date and informed. L. Ruma asked about the sequencing of installing sound walls and track work; T. McSherry said the concrete panels are done but the steel is not yet done at College Ave.

T. McCarthy said there will continue to be Red Line and Orange Line shutdowns in coordination with GLX and other projects. J. Silva asked if there is a schedule that can be published regarding the Red Line outages and diversions so commuters can plan their commutes accordingly with enough advance notice when the Green Line Viaduct is out of service. T. McCarthy said the MBTA is a two-track system which forces limited closures when maintenance work is needed. Weekend shutdowns provide some time but not always enough to complete the work, resulting in additional shutdowns. T. McCarthy said standard practice is to keep the old Red and Orange system up and running until the new system is operational. J. Silva asked for schedules to be published that show future planned outages on the Red Line and other lines; T. McCarthy said he will research his question and get back to him.

R. McSherry summarized the following construction activities that occurred in Winter 2019:

- Relocated much of the commuter rail track to final position on eastern side of alignment;
- completed much of the drainage work (including north of Broadway at Granville) and completed noise & retaining wall construction with panel placement to occur later prior to the track relocation;
- foundation, underground utilities and retaining wall construction completed at vehicle maintenance facility (VMF); and
- steel in place throughout and deck construction has begun

R. McSherry said the commuter rail track was shifted in section 1 near Tufts University. L. Ruma asked if there will continue to be night and weekend work through the winter at College Ave; R. McSherry confirmed there will continue to be night and weekend work. R. McSherry said the stormwater line replacement near Central is complete and they are preparing for the track shift. The retaining wall south of Central Street and the Broadway Bridge foundations are still underway. The foundation construction continues at Union Square Station area and crews are driving an additional sheet wall. Building a retaining wall behind Target and will be one of the first areas where final GLX track will begin construction. The foundation drilling continues between Boston Engine Terminal and Water Street. The work zone adjacent to the Brickbottom Condominiums is still very active.

R. McSherry said the retaining wall work and drainage installation continues at the VMF and the contractor for vertical work, Consigli, has mobilized in the area.

J. Wagner said hotline contacts and email contacts slowed down during December and are beginning to pick back up. Of more than 1,000 contacts to the team; 918 have been closed out. The major public outreach/communications campaign for the Lechemere Station closure is slated to begin early this year. T. McCarthy said the team is developing a public outreach plan, as was done for the bridge closures, for the Lechemere closure and bus diversions. The team has drawn a 1-mile radius around the station for outreach efforts and will use sandwich boards and less flyers. The pedestrian areas will include sandwich boards and the variable message boards will target the vehicular traffic. T. McCarthy asked for contact information for the Kendall Square Business Association as he would like to contact them to make a small presentation; J. Barr said he can get contact information. T. McCarthy said efforts will be made to work with local hospitals and medical offices for communications with patients and those visiting. M. Nee said the businesses are a key population and employees need to get to work on time using public transportation. T. McCarthy said there are over 100,000 people driving into this area for work and is approximately 5,000 MBTA users coming through Lechemere Station. T. McCarthy said they want to provide the best bus diversion service possible, so people do not drive all the way in. M. Nee said the decision about which transportation route to take will begin farther outside of this area and may dictate that commuters avoid the entire area if that is an option. J. Barr said the experience of riding the Red or

Orange line every day is not always great so finding the right way to frame the diversion is key. J. Dorsen said the immense impact to the environmental justice communities as a result of this project should be considered, in addition to the 1-mile radius. T. McCarthy said additional, regional efforts will be made to communicate with these neighborhoods and communities. J. Barr said there are also residents who will not benefit from the GLX after completion that will be impacted by these diversions and may not be as aware of the project as those who have this project in their backyard. J. Silva said he and J. Dorsen had previously suggested bus service extend to the terminus of the GLX line, instead of just to Lechmere. M. Dullea said operations has reviewed potential service to these areas and the biggest issue is space constraints for additional buses in the North Station area. T. McCarthy said they have made a commitment to run buses as normal until the new route is available for use. M. Dullea said they are looking to find areas to carve out specific bus lanes, especially near O'Brien highway. M. Dullea said the Nashua Street area is another area where a bus lane would be beneficial for commuters and vehicular traffic. J. Barr said signal timing where Nashua Street intersects at the JL circle should be reviewed because it does not seem the timing is appropriate. T. McCarthy said he is adding that signal to the list as they investigate others. Viola asked how Somerville is being kept in the loop about all of this; T. McCarthy said he will send her the presentation.

J. Wagner said there were two fundraising events held last month:

- MBTA Fill-A-Bus
- Portal to Hope – collected \$1,095 in gift cards (teamed up with Medford PD)

T. McCarthy said the gift cards will be used throughout the year and range from food to clothing. Mary Grace who ran this fundraiser had an original goal of \$1,000 and was able to reach \$300 within a few days.

#### Question & Answer:

1. J. Silva asked about walking the overpass at one of the CWG meetings; T. McCarthy said he can work that out with Randy for a future meeting.
2. L. Ruma asked when will the next general project public meeting be held? T. McCarthy said it will likely happen in March. M. Nee said it will precede the Lechmere Bus diversions. L. Ruma suggested celebrating the bridge reopening(s) and other milestones to keep the public excited about the progress.
3. Why will Lechmere be closed for a year? T. McCarthy said it will take 1 year to rebuild the viaduct; R. McSherry said this is the tie-in point for the new Green Line to the old Green Line and will include testing and additional utility installations. R. Henke said testing can take about 6 months to complete. T. McCarthy said he will be talking about marketing and outreach during this time next year to reach the schools; safety presentations as well as transit information for using the Green Line when online. The team will also reach out to senior centers about safety and potential hazards.
4. M. Hartman asked if the pile driving has stopped in the School Street area; T. McCarthy said the large drainage excavation and installation has completed but there will be additional noise generated. The noise-generating work will be more sporadic and will be more focused for day work.
5. A question was asked if new Lechmere Station will open before GLX is in revenue service. R. Henke said trains will run through to Lechmere; Spring 2021 is the goal for Union Station/Branch to be reopened, along with Lechmere Station.
6. M. Johnson asked where is the bus stop at Lechmere during the diversion for the shuttle? T. McCarthy said it will be on the Cambridge Street side.

7. M. Hartman asked if the neighbor whose fence was damaged during sound wall installation near Tufts University was contacted. R. McSherry said these are addressed on a case-by-case basis and will be fixed upon completion. T. McCarthy said they will work with the neighbors, so the yard is still accessible for the wall. R. McSherry said they will reach out to the homeowner to address this.

T. McCarthy thanked everyone for coming and for their efforts in making GLX what it is today.

Meeting concluded at 9:35 AM. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, at 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., at 200 Inner Belt Road, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.