



December 15, 2021

Memorial Drive Reconstruction Environmental Notification Form

Memorial Drive
Reconstruction Project
January 18, 2022
1 PM

MEPA Public Meeting

Massachusetts Department
of Conservation and
Recreation





Agenda

1. Introduction to MEPA Process
2. Project Background / Goals
3. Environmental Justice Engagement
4. Land Uses / Environmental
5. Alternative Analysis
6. Project Design Review
7. Landscape Design Review
8. Tree Survey & Evaluation
9. Questions



Memorial Drive Reconstruction Project

Introduction by
Dan Driscoll, DCR

- A “road diet” allows for new bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and parkland improvements
- Advances goals of the DCR Charles River Master Plan, DCR Historic Parkway Preservations Guidelines, and the City of Cambridge Riverfront Plan
- Extensive Public Engagement

Memorial Drive Reconstruction Project

- Preserves and restore vistas
- Consistent with original vision of Charles River Basin Parkland
- Enhances the passive recreational functions of parkways
- Provides improved stormwater treatment through green infrastructure



Project Site



Public Outreach Summary

Over 1,200 public comments received on the Project to date

Online Public Input Map (Project Wiki)

April 11, 2019 – Public Listening Session, Cambridge

June 25, 2019 – Public Meeting, Cambridge

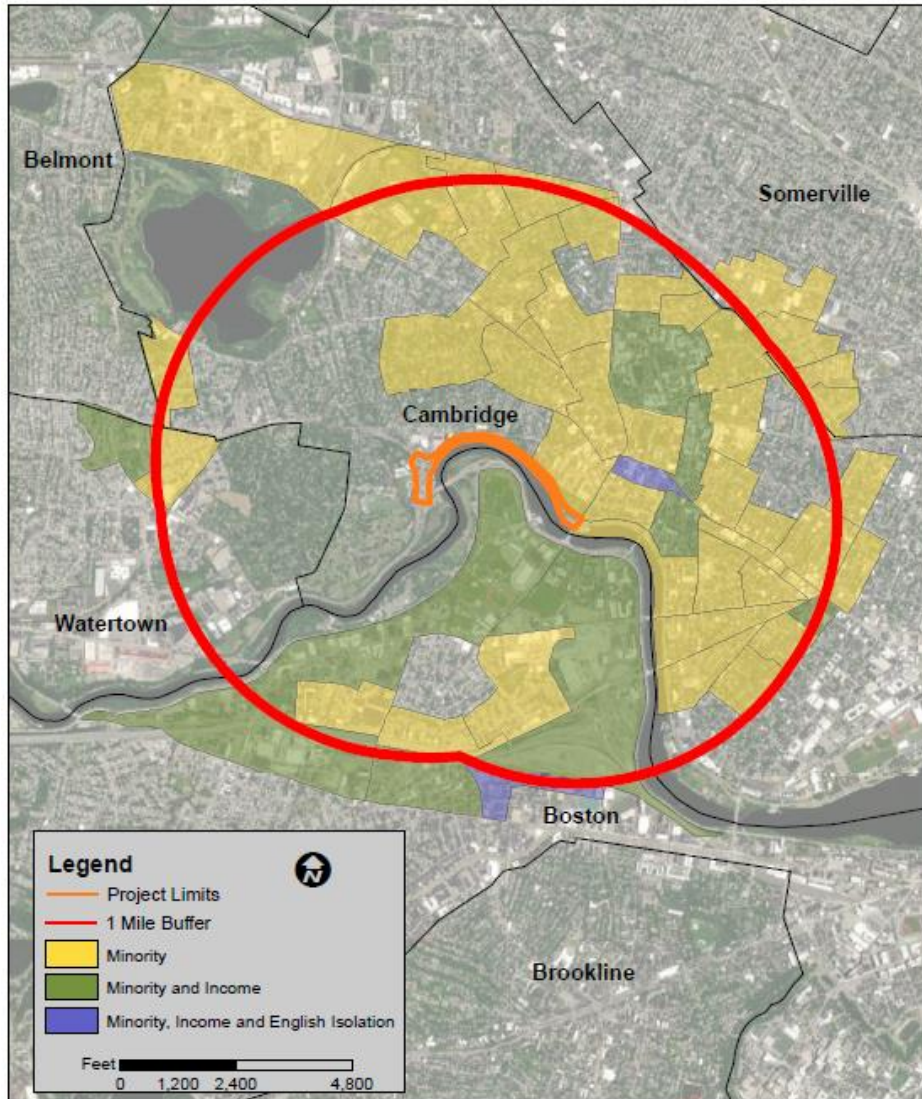
Additional Meetings with Local and Community Stakeholders to be held in 2022

Enhanced Environmental Justice Outreach

- Identified local community EJ advocates in the community for distribution of ENF
- Additional EJ Advocates identified by the MEPA office
- Translations of MEPA Meeting Notice in Chinese Mandarin, Chinese Cantonese, Haitian French Creole and Spanish

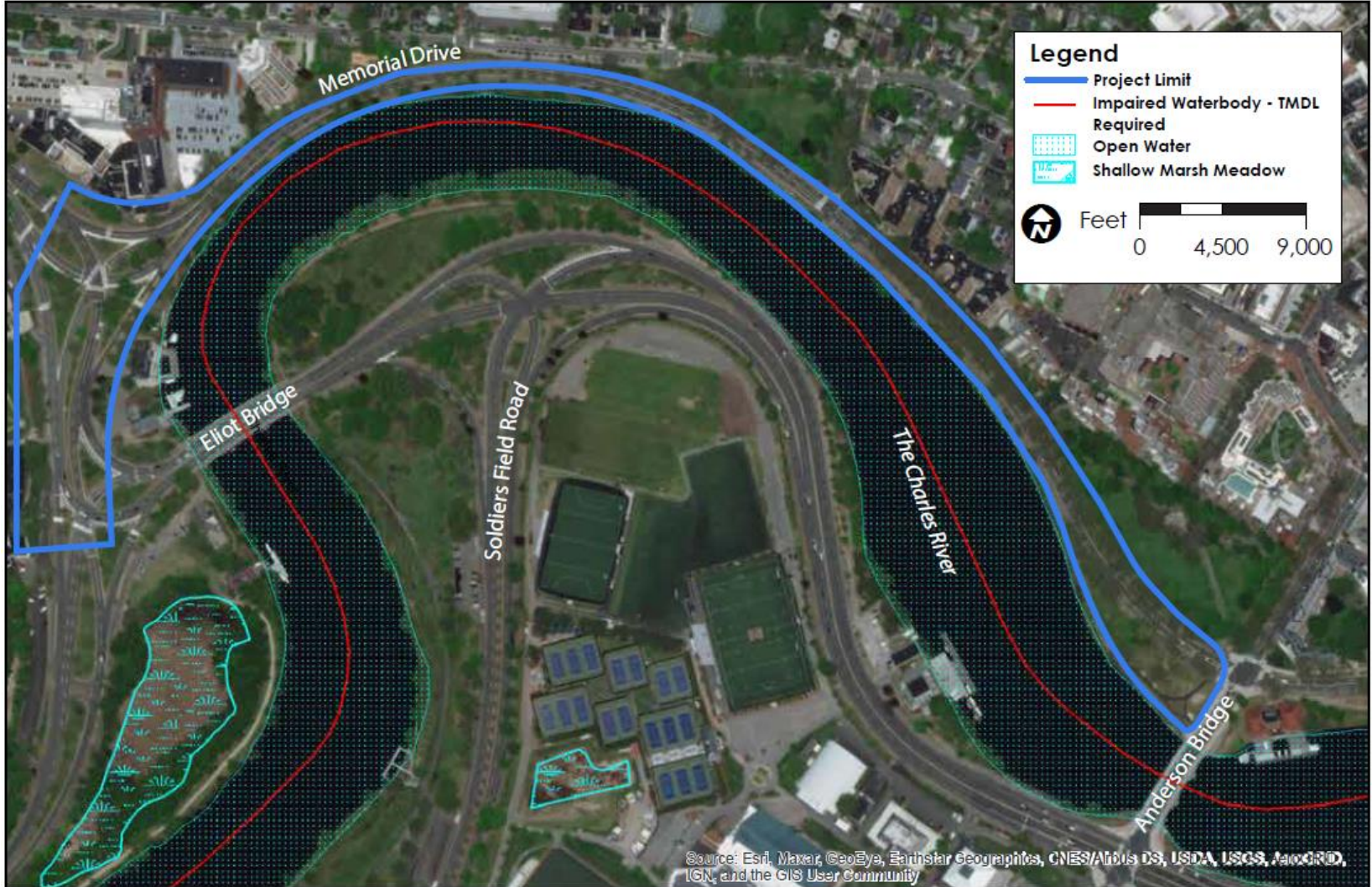


Environmental Justice Communities

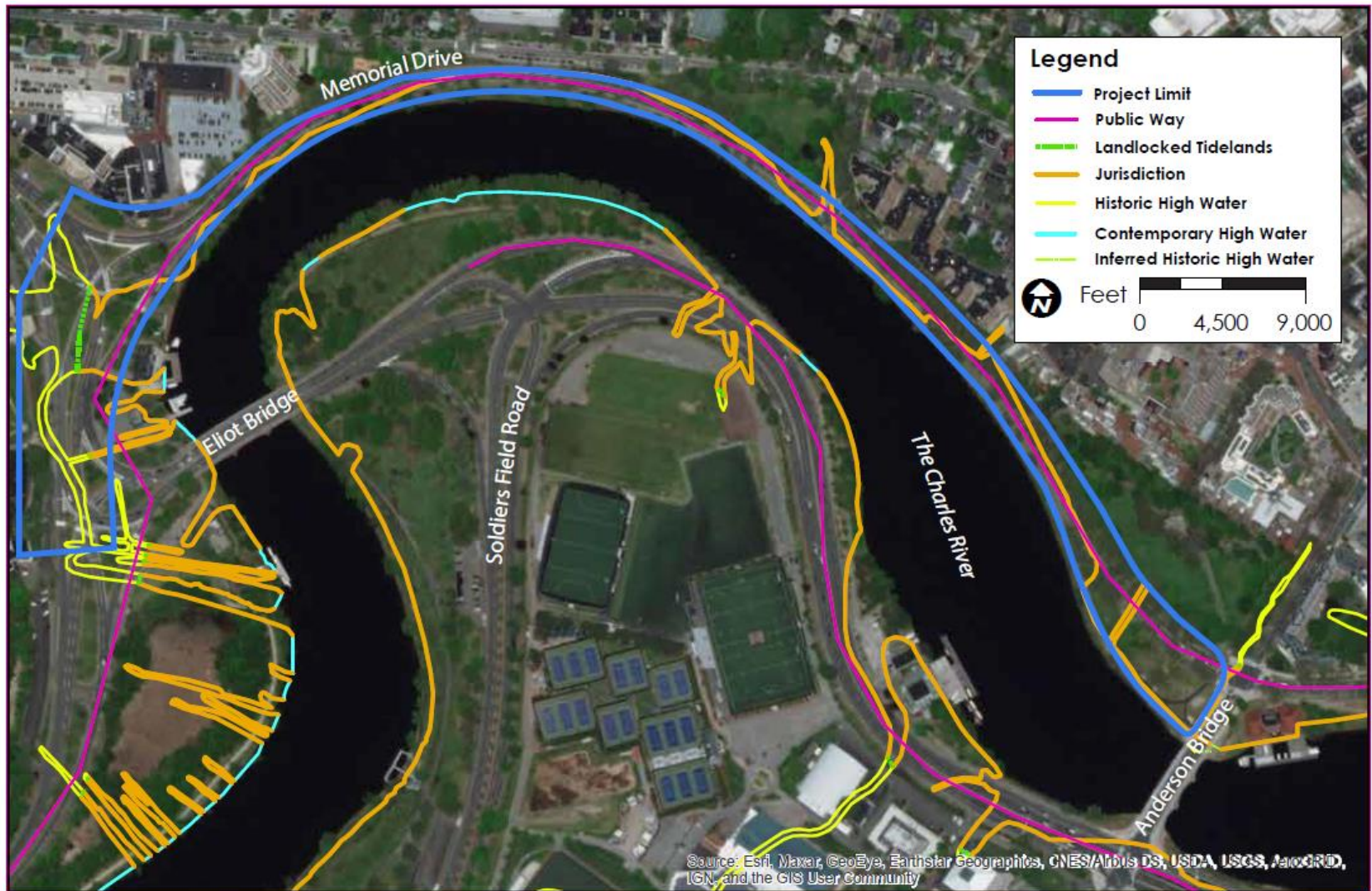


- Environmental Justice Community within 1-mile of the Project.
- Project design will provide enhanced multimodal options for all community members.

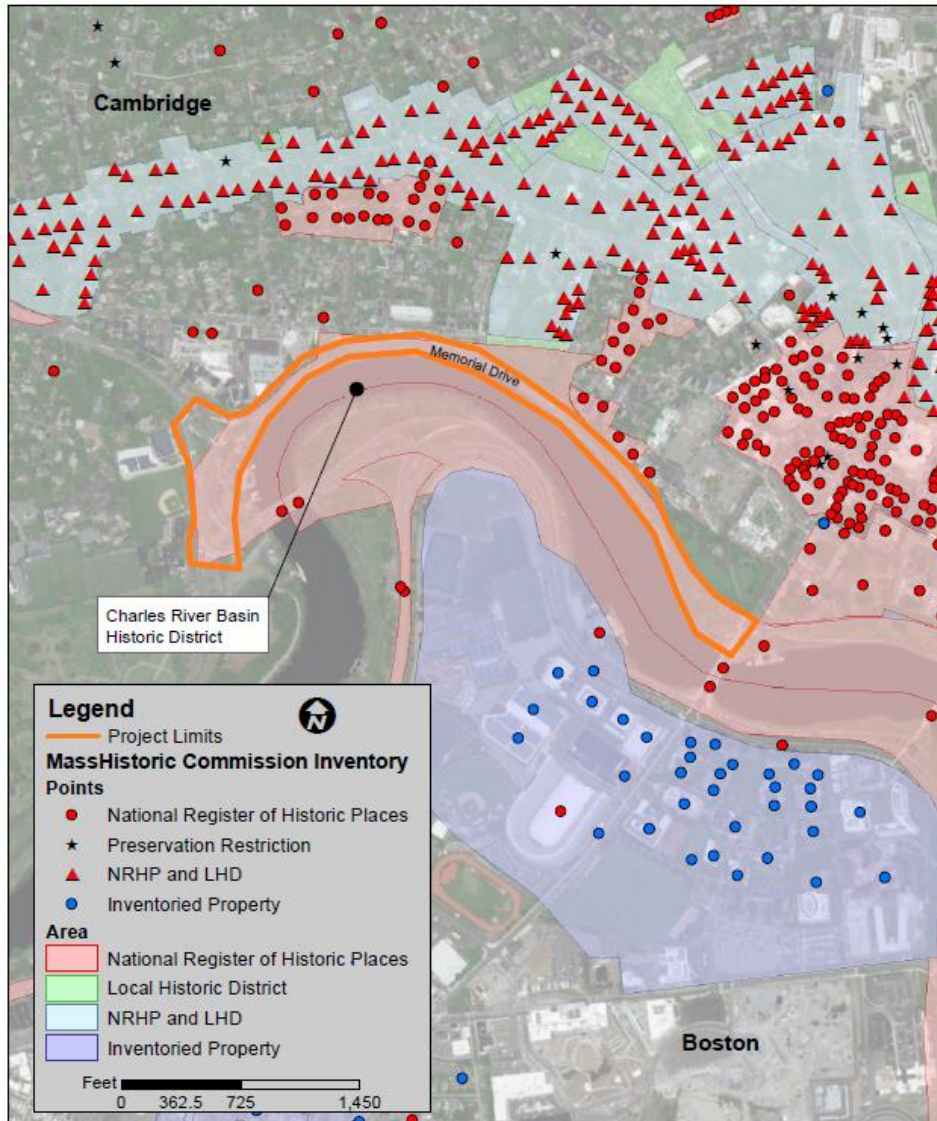
Wetland Resources – WPA Notice of Intent



Chapter 91 Minor Modification



Historic Resources



- Project site located within Charles River Basin National Register Historic District
- Massachusetts Historical Commission Review

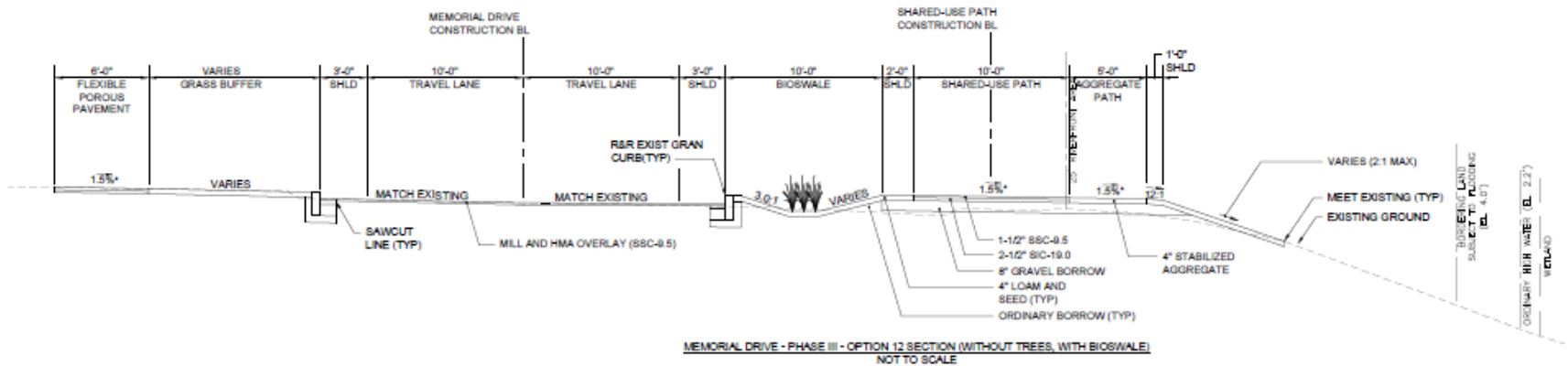
Alternatives Evaluated

12 Alternatives evaluated that balanced goals of the project:

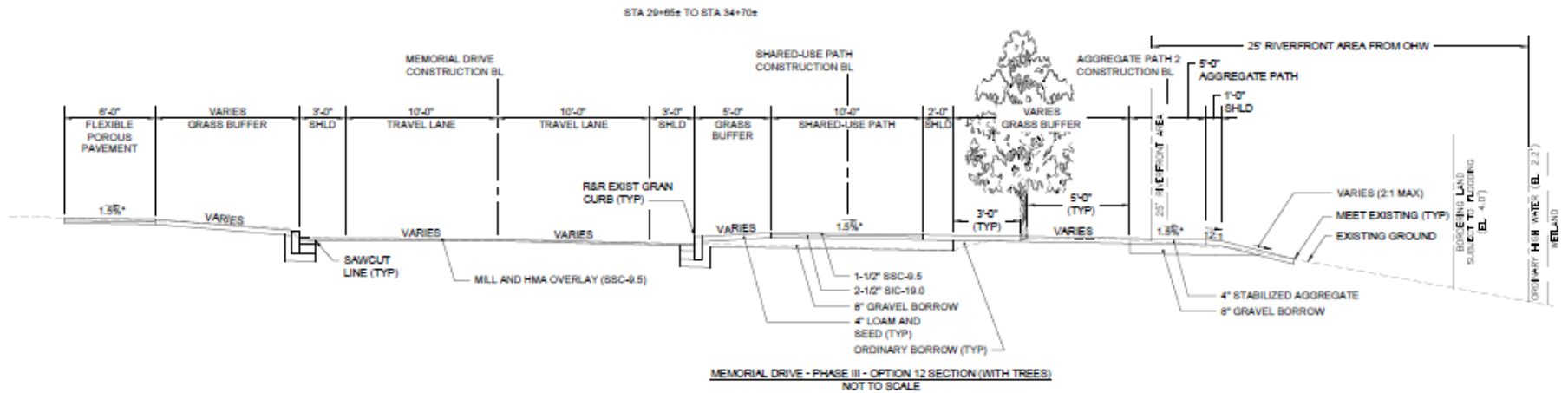
- Improve multimodal travel options for all community members.
- Avoid / minimize impact to environmental resources (trees, wetlands, historic resources).
- Improve landscaping and parkland facilities.
- Improve stormwater treatment.
- Maintain acceptable traffic operations.

Alternative's analysis informed by input from public engagement.

Cross Section of Proposed Project Parkland Improvements with Bioswale



Cross Section of Proposed Project Memorial Drive with Trees



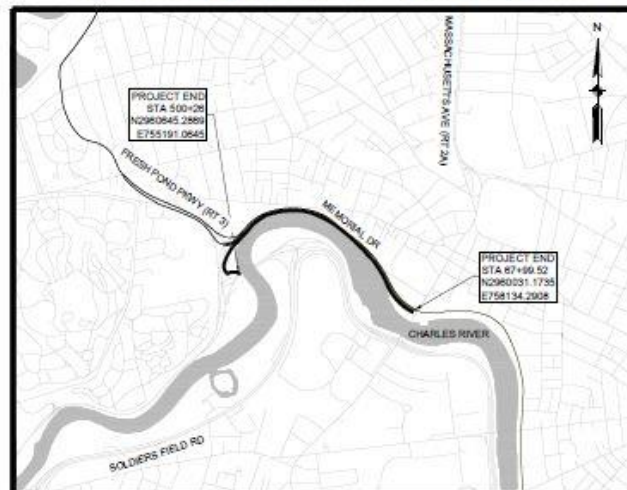
Design Review

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

PLAN AND PROFILE OF
MEMORIAL DRIVE

IN THE CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
MIDDLESEX COUNTY

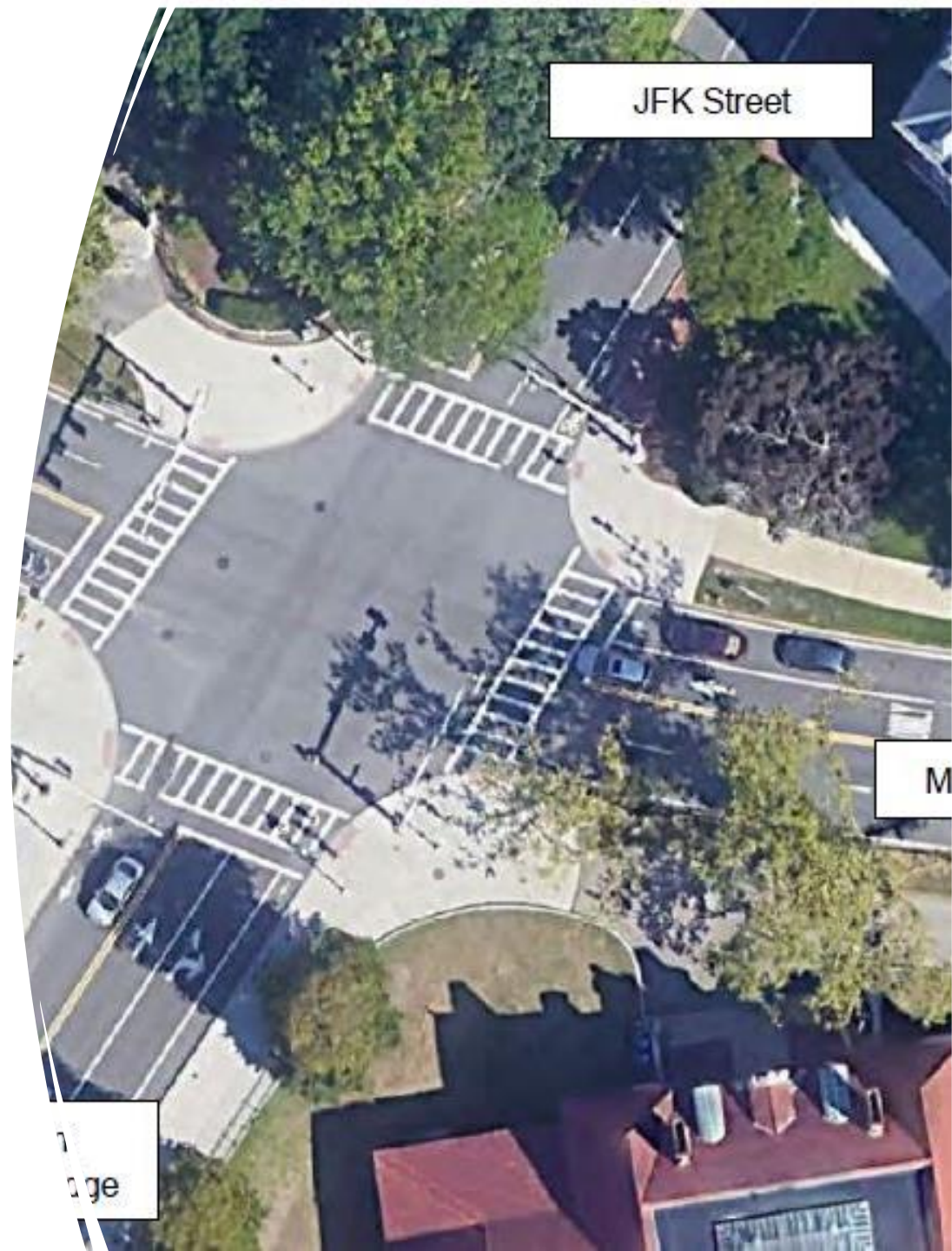
PERMIT PLANS



PERMIT PL
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

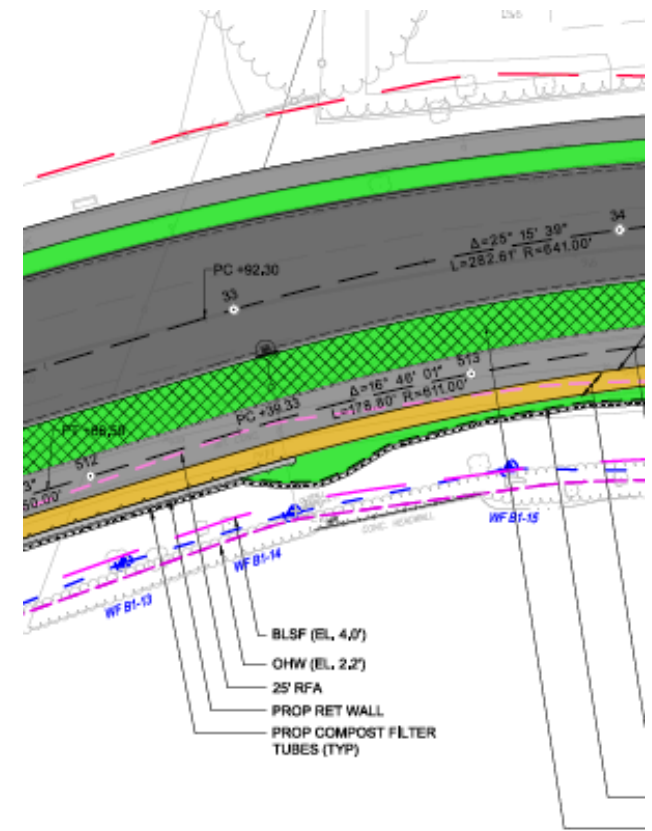
Traffic Analysis and Pedestrian Improvements

- Traffic signal improvements at Gerrys Landing Road, Hawthorn Street and JFK Street.
- Improvements to crosswalks and two new mid-block crosswalk at Sparks Street and JFK Park with pedestrian-activated signals.
- Acceptable future LOS at intersections (similar to existing conditions).



Green Infrastructure/Stormwater Improvements

- Charles River – U.S EPA designated Impaired Waterway.
- Charles River TMDL requires 22% reduction in phosphorus loading.
- Green infrastructure proposed includes rain gardens, dry swales, pervious sidewalk, and an overall decrease in impervious roadway surface.
- Stormwater improvements projected to provide a phosphorus reduction of 34.8%.



Scenic Overlook Example



- Two pile-supported river overlooks.
- 30' x 10' overlook will provide resting areas with outstanding river views.

Example Scenic Overlook, Northern Strand Trail, Saugus

London Plane Trees

- Tree Inventory Conducted
- On Site Meetings with DCR Arborist
- Extensive Landscape Mitigation Plan
- London Plane Trees proposed to be removed are damaged and in poor condition due to age and vehicle strikes
- London Plane Trees proposed for removal due to location of new multiuse path
 - Examples (photo left):
 - London Plane Tree #6544: Decay on trunk on roadside, girdling roots, cavities, in the way of traffic signal, dead at top
 - London Plane Tree #6553: Internal decay, structural defects, mechanical damage at base.



London Plane Trees

- London Plane Tree #6554
- Half gone, remaining leader and branches leaning towards river, decay, structural integrity compromised



London Plane Trees

- London Plane Trees #6555 & 6556
- Decay through middle, split.
- Dead section towards road.



Questions and Next Steps

- The Environmental Notification Form was filed on December 15, 2021
- Comments on the project will be welcome in writing until January 27, 2022.
- A Certificate on the ENF will be issued on February 7, 2022.
- All comments regarding the ENF should be sent to:
Secretary Kathleen Theoharides
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
ATTN: MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114
- Comments may also be sent electronically using the MEPA Public Comment portal found at:
<https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/EEA/PublicComment/Landing/>