MEMORANDUM

To:	Val Soroka Project Manager	Date:	March 2, 2017
From:	Hannah Brockhaus Howard Stein Hudson	HSH Project No.:	2015136.00
Subject:	Department of Conservation and Recreation Mount Auburn Street Corridor Study Stakeholder Group Meeting #7 Meeting Notes of January 10, 2017		

Overview

On January 10th, members of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Mount Auburn Street Corridor Study project team and DCR staff associated with the job held its seventh Stakeholder Group meeting. The meeting took place at Russell Youth Community Center, located at 680 Huron Avenue in Cambridge. The stakeholder group is composed of local residents, representatives of major institutional and business stakeholders in the area, cycling, pedestrian, and green space advocates, as well as members, both elected and appointed, of local, state, and federal government for the project area.

The purpose of the stakeholder group is, through the use of its members' considerable local knowledge, to assist and advise the DCR in developing short- and long-term recommendations for the improvement of the Mount Auburn Street corridor and its abutting roadways. Through this project, the agency seeks to create a corridor which is friendlier to transit users, cyclists, and pedestrians, and to strengthen connections between abutting neighborhoods and the key green space of the Charles River, while ensuring calm, efficient vehicle operations.

Pete Stidman started the meeting by providing an overview of the feedback received after the second public meeting, including the results of the dot polling between Options A and B for the long term concept. Option A was selected for the Mount Auburn and Gerry's Landing portions of the study area, and Option B was chosen for Fresh Pond Parkway. New improvements to bicycle accommodations on the Mount Auburn Corridor were highlighted; these will now provide a smooth, continuous connection between Watertown and the Cambridge-Watertown Greenway to points east

via Brattle. Pete also provided further explanation on why bicycle accommodations between Coolidge Avenue and Brattle aren't possible, and other follow up on commentary received after the last public meeting.

The project team also provided detail on the signal phasing at the intersection of Fresh Pond Parkway at Mount Auburn. The team responded to comments both in favor and against bicycle lanes on the Eliot Bridge at the public meeting. Analysis and an explanation of people delay for the Mount Auburn Corridor followed. The meeting was wrapped up with a discussion of benefits of the project, including where Vision Zero and Cambridge Bicycle Plan goals align with the short and long term concepts, and a discussion session.

Attendees generally reacted very positively to improvements made to the plans, as well as the analysis of transit lane benefits. They requested the team investigate the current parking regulations at the Star Market parking lot and pull-through spaces for local businesses, but were generally satisfied that this issue is one of many which will be addressed through further analysis at the next design stage. Members of the community were anxious to see improvements in the short term, particularly the bus lane. There was a request to emphasize long term, regional planning needs in the context of the corridor for the final report of the study, stemming from the desire to design for further reductions of vehicular traffic along the corridor. Pete noted that there are elements of the redesign of the Mt. Auburn Street and Fresh Pond Parkway intersection that will need to be reproduced in the short term improvements in order to provide the full benefits of both the transit priority lane and the improved traffic operations for Mount Auburn Street eastbound in the AM peak. The meeting was closed with a request for the stakeholder group to share information with their neighbors, and encourage them to come to the final public meeting of the conceptualization phase on January 31st.

Agenda

I. Welcome
II. Concept Feedback and Response
III. Benefits of the Plan
IV. Short Term Considerations
V. Discussion

Detailed Meeting Minutes[1]

A: Pete Stidman (PS): Good evening everyone. Sorry for the delay - we had some technical difficulties. Tonight shows a work in progress, and we're looking forward to the public meeting on the 31st. I'm going to walk you through some of the changes in the design that we're thinking about and testing and trying to fit in for you guys based on the comments we got on November 14th. Also, in the interim, our friend Ken Kirwin, the project manager on this project, has retired at DCR. So we have Valenti Soroka, who will be the Project Manager going forward. Rob Lowell from DCR, who has been coming to all our meetings, the acting Chief Engineer over there, will continue to keep up with the project – he just couldn't make it tonight.

Just to review, this is the project area. This is our schedule. We're still doing pretty well. We're having the final public meeting at the end of January, and then based on the comments we get will be compiling the final report for the concept. Again, we're trying to get to the end of the conceptual stage. When we get to the end of this, there's still a whole lot ahead of us in terms of developing a final design for the long term option. We're still discussing with DCR what the short term option might be. A paint and flex posts type option might be possible to add some of the elements of the bigger plan that we've developed.

We're going to talk about the feedback and response as I mentioned, and also short term considerations and the benefits of the plan. These two are in the opposite order. A big warning: these are just concepts; we're working with you guys on this draft.

First we're going to review the community feedback we got at the public meeting on November 14th. At the end of meeting, you'll remember we had the roll plans out, and people used red and green dots to say that they liked or disliked a feature. The sticky notes were to add comments.

First we'll go through the landscaping options from CSS – Tamar is here. This is Scheme 1. A lot of people didn't like this parking configuration. Overall, it got 5 green dots and 7 red dots. I don't mean this to be a final vote – it's taking your temperature. Scheme 2 had a little more popularity, I think because there was a bicycle lane through this one. People were calling for a bicycle lane in the other direction, more trees, and a lot of other things. That was the more popular option, so we went with a version of Scheme 2 for the final draft concept. For Scheme 1 over on Brattle Street, people really liked the Hubway Station; they liked the bicycle paths, and asked for a variety of things. Scheme 1 got six votes. Scheme 2 was a little less popular, but there

[1] Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1. For received comments, please see Appendix 2.

was not a lot of feedback on these. We chose Scheme 1 to go with going forward, and of course you can still comment on that.

This is Fresh Pond Parkway. The main difference between Option A and B was that A had the stamped asphalt. We didn't get a lot of feedback on these. Option B had the raised intersections. We went with Option B on this stretch, as a placeholder for when they go forward in design.

Down here by the river, Option A got five votes. A lot of the green dots you can't see very well because they are in the park. For B, same thing: there were a lot of green dots over here on the park. BB&N folks and others didn't like the parking configurations on this one, and this turn-around had some red dots because of confusion around it. We chose Option A as a starting point, and I'll show you later that we made changes to it.

On the Mount Auburn Corridor, the differences between Option A and B are pretty minimal. Option A doesn't have the merge at Brattle, and included a bus lane between Homer and Aberdeen, and the other one, we'll see in a minute, does not. B maintains the merge and doesn't have this piece of transit lane. Option A got the most votes. This is the east side of Option A. Here's the west side. Both plans got a lot of negative votes on the plaza and suggestions for what to do there. The merge got some red votes. On the west side of Mount Auburn, people want the bikeway on the north side, but Option B got fewer votes. We went with Option A as a starting point.

As a note, a lot of people wanted a westbound bicycle lane – this was noted in a lot of feedback options. That was consistent with a lot of other comments we got. We received a bunch of letters after that meeting. One of the biggest points of discussion was better bicycle infrastructure. There were a few types of comments. We heard a lot of support for separated bicycle lanes on the entire Mount Auburn corridor. We also got a lot of support for the transit lanes we had put in, which presented something of a conflict, space wise. We'll look at that a little. There was also a lot of support for keeping motorist delay at a minimum. We got a few emails around installing a bus lane and people's concerns around that, specifically related to traffic. There was strong support for removing the Brattle merge, and a suggestion for a pedestrian actuated crossing signal at Larch Road, instead of how we had originally designed it, as a raised crosswalk with a Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacon or some other treatment.

Then we had a debate around the use of the raised table intersections at Huron and Brattle. They're not typically used in Cambridge on signalized intersections. They're not typically used around the country outside of the neighborhood context. You have a higher volume roadway here – it's just not a typical use. In the literature research that we've done, we can't find any reason

necessarily not to do it, so it's still an open discussion. It hasn't really been done, and there's not a lot of research on it, but that's something we'll talk about in a bit as we go through these. There was also concern about safe access to the U-turn off Greenough Boulevard.

Just look at these four for a minute. They're all somewhat related along the Mount Auburn corridor. We took a strong, hard look at bicycle infrastructure and how to make it more consistent throughout the corridor on Mount Auburn. We had this design previously. We straightened this out a bit more to help the merge for bicycles and cars here. We have a raised intersection at Coolidge Avenue/Mount Auburn Street but this is one area where we're not able to provide anything better. It's really pinched right here, so we have sharrows, but you'll see starting here we have a bicycle lane in both directions and that's on the next slide. From Homer to Aberdeen, we have a bicycle lane that converts at the very end into a protected bicycle lane. How we achieve this is by taking out the transit lane that we used to have going through here. We took that away in order to provide some bicycle infrastructure, and when we analyzed this, it didn't actually harm the transit time savings too badly in the 90th percentile, which is what the T uses to figure out its routes.

Over from Homer to Belmont, we had a little more room in the roadway. That gives us enough room on this side to do a buffered bicycle lane that perhaps could be raised. The bicycle lane would start in Watertown, so people coming from Watertown would be able to continue through this intersection as if it was raised. Then they'd continue through here safely. On the other side, it's a different condition, but just as protected through the pedestrian plaza. If you remember, this is the more popular landscaping option for the plaza. It maintains six parking spaces, because we heard some feedback about the local businesses depending on that parking. They're not able to use the Star Market lot, so that's a concern and a discussion to keep going forward with. Because of the catenary in here, which this parking avoids, it's difficult to provide more parking along the street. Conversely, when you start to cut parking in here, then you cut away from most of the plaza, as you saw with the other option and existing conditions. It's a dilemma; when you provide a nicer place to stay and hang out, you may actually be providing more customers than you do with parking. That's something that would need additional conversation in the community.

Q: Jonathan Hecht (JH): How many spaces are there now?

A: PS: I would guess something around 12 to 14.[2] You'd keep a little more than half.

[2] Actual number of spaces is 15.

Q: Jan Devereux (JD): There are two different property owners and a smaller building - do they actually patrol the Star Market lot, and tell people they can't park there?

A: PS: According to the feedback we got, and bad on me for not looking into it further, the businesses have been saying that they can't use the parking lot.

A: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): If I may, Pete, one of the things that is important and as you can tell from some of Pete's commentary, we are at a draft stage, but there is still more process to come on this. This is a more long term thing. When you're going to have a long term conversation, you could theoretically see going to Star Market, involving them saying, we want to make some changes. You guys have lots of ready to take food now, which you might not have had when you're building and parking lot were built. We'd like to make this plaza into some place you might sit after getting chicken, or sushi, or whatever. We've heard that small business patrons can't park over in your lot. A, is it true; do you need to enforce it and B) what arrangements can be made? This is presenting what we heard, what we felt, and what the draft is based on that, but, again, before when you get deeper into design on this, that's a conversation you can have.

C: PS: We'll make a note to check that out. If it's as easy as a call, we can do that.

Also I wouldn't want to mention the bicycle infrastructure without mentioning the connection to the Watertown Greenway. This contraflow lane here helps do that in two directions. Also on the plan, I don't have it here tonight, but it will be shown in the public meeting, we connected to the Watertown plan for Mount Auburn. Gideon, if you could help me out here. One of the first roads, on the left, …

C: Gideon Schreiber (GS): Cottage

A: PS: yes, Cottage, ties in. There's a little bit of parking removal that would be needed to do it just like this – it's about three spaces in front of businesses that also have parking lots. It may not be high impact, but it's something that we can talk to Watertown about, and it can tie in.

Cottage Street is where the transit lane starts as well.

We also attempted to do bicycle lanes between Brattle Street and Fresh Pond Parkway. We drew up a plan, although we didn't get it colored up for the presentation tonight, which shows them, and then we tested this in VISSIM.

Here's the challenge: in order to get separated bicycle lanes in here that the community is asking for, you need a five foot bicycle lane and a two foot buffer on each side and this is the actual

width of the roadway. The lanes are already very narrow, and there's a narrow buffer with trees, and a narrow sidewalk. Not only would this eliminate trees if we put it in today, it would eliminate part of the sidewalk. We had to figure out what to take out of the middle. We showed you this before: the peak queues. It works in the AM peak, but in the PM peak you have really large queues – I was just avoiding one on the way over here. We went the extra step to test this out in VISSIM. We want to look at the road diet animation right now.

C: AS: Mount Auburn Street, or Fresh Pond?

A: PS: Mount Auburn – there was a request to review whether we can put in. [3]

We tested this in VISSIM, and basically the key problem, is that you have the two turn lanes coming off Fresh Pond Parkway onto Mount Auburn Street. In the PM peak, there's a really strong flow on that move. This queue gets so long that it's here when the light turns, so they have no way to get in. They end up blocking Fresh Pond Parkway. The simulation we did actually reflected our changes down by the river also. The stuff down by the river meters traffic to a strong degree than existing. Basically, the model was with less traffic than there is today, and it still didn't work. It's a problem that is going to be really difficult to solve and also meet the goal of maintaining traffic flows like some of your neighbors are asking.

Another thing we did figure out was how to get two way bicycle traffic through this intersection. This is all the same down here – you can take your bicycle going this way on Mount Auburn, but now we've also connected this crossing here. Because bicycles can cross it faster than pedestrians can, we can get them through, I believe, in one phase. Over here, there's a signal for bicycles that allows them in when this traffic is stopped; when there's an all-walk phase in this signal. That allows them to continue down the corridor.

Moving forward, there was a suggestion for a pedestrian actuated crossing at Larch Road and the debate about raised tables to get some illustrations for those. This is what we had before at Larch Road: a raised crossing. We heard concerns around sight lines coming around corners, also noise, because any time a car goes over any bump, it makes a noise, and this is a residential neighborhood. Having a pedestrian actuated crossing would allow people on either side of the roadway to cross wherever they want and have them do so in a fully protected way.

Q: Russ Windman (RW): Would that be pedestrian actuated?

[3] There were technical difficulties, and the video was not available, as previously thought. Members of the project team were able to load the video later during the presentation.

A: PS: Yes, pedestrian actuated, but still coordinated.

Q: RW: Would you texture the road surface if you didn't raise it?

A: PS: It would be a stamped pavement. Is that what you mean?

C: RW: I understand that, but would you texture the road surface.

A: PS: You would support that, is that what you're saying?

C: RW: Yes.

C: PS: Okay, noted. There are different crosswalk designs that might be useful, we can look at that. This is the raised crossing. There are discussions of this kind of a raised crossing. Typically in residential neighborhoods, you'll have a six inch rise (over ten feet) on a raised crossing. There is also a three inch rise option, which is less of a bump. There are discussions about a similar facility going in on Melnea Cass Boulevard over in Roxbury. We're tracking that project as it relates to this one. What we suggest for this concept, since we're still at the conceptual phase, is to finalize the plan with language in the report to reflect the debate and carry it forward into 25% design. Basically, the idea is not to resolve the debate as part of the concept, but to note the debate.

I also want to point out the police enforcement opportunities, because I know that the concern with all of this is speed on the corridor. We are providing a place here in the short term where a police car could pull over and monitor the situation. In the long term that opportunity is still there.

We also heard some concern about safe access to the U-turn across off of Greenough Boulevard. That was a turn-around, on the side of the road. Instead of keeping that we decided to design a new turnaround solution, which ties in better with the Greenough Boulevard plan, now existing down here. Instead of having a turn-around on the side of the road, we've gone a little more traditional with it, and now you can do a pretty similar move to what you do today. Are there any questions on that?

Q: Janice Gould (JG): Did it change from one lane back to two lanes for this turn?

A: PS: No. It was two here, and it was going to go down to one eventually, because of the Greenough Boulevard road diet.

Q: JG: Right. But I thought it was originally one lane all the way past the high school.

A: NCC: I think that's further down it blends into the road diet. I'm pretty sure it never came all the way to the high school.

Q: Bill Deignan (BD): Are people able to go across Greenough Boulevard from the turn-around? Without the arrows, I'm not sure of the direction of traffic. I'm afraid of people making the connection from the turnaround to the parking lot of BB&N.

A: PS: that's an entrance to the parking lot.

Q: BD: And the turn-around is just a right in?

A: PS: Yes. This would be signed and designed so that you can't turn left there.

Q: Arthur Strang (AS): Do busses need to turn-around?

A: PS: We didn't do auto-turn on that corner, but that would be the idea, probably. That's actually a question for BB&N, really: do your buses turn around over there? It certainly could, we just didn't test it.

C: JG: Generally the buses don't enter that parking lot. That parking lot is for faculty and student parking. The buses are more at the gym or they enter at the driveway.

C: PS: But they may turn around here.

A: JG: Right, they do turn around there to change direction.

A: NCC: That would be a natural part of the progression from this to traditional design. By the time we get to a traditional 25% design public hearing you'd have this settled. This may change a bit; you want the buses to be able to turn around. The turn heading into it from the right might become gentler and the illegal left coming in from Greenough might become sharper. By the time you get to 25%, you'd have a graphic that would reflect that. Again, that is something we would address further as we get deeper into the process.

A: PS: Let's make a star, and we'll come back with AutoTurn on that. I added an extra one sneakily here. We also had a request at the last meeting for all walk at the Fresh Pond/Mont Auburn intersection. That's this move. I don't remember who suggested this, but we wanted to look at

whether that was possible. We mapped out how the phase works. This is how the signals work at Mount Auburn at Fresh Pond.

During phase 1, people can walk at all these blue arrow locations. The cars are the white arrows, of course. When we walk through this, you'll see that there are always cars crossing this red arrow. This phase, people can walk here. The third phase, people can walk here, and this is when bicycles would walk as well. Then we looked at if there was an exclusive pedestrian phase hear, meaning a phase that stops all traffic so that pedestrians could walk in all directions, what that would do to traffic is illustrated here. We see some really significant delays in Mount Auburn eastbound and Fresh Pond Parkway northbound. We checked it out, but it's not an easy one to do.

Q: BD: What's that assuming: how many times is that actuated per hour?

Q: PS: What are the assumptions here, Bob?

A: Bob Stathopoulos (BS): That would be based on the counts we've collected through this area. You're activating once every cycle or once every couple of cycles, depending on how many pedestrians are going through. I don't remember the exact number to give you a more specific answer.

C: AS: How many seconds does it take to cross there?

A: BS: It takes at least 30 seconds if not more to cross. When you have a close to 110 second cycle, and you need 30 seconds for crossing pedestrians, you're only leaving 80 seconds for vehicles to cross, that's why there is so much delay

C: PS: To his credit, he had that on the slide, but I took that out, I thought it was extraneous.

Q: AS: Would this be on demand or all the time? Right now there are so few people crossing there.

A: BS: It would be pedestrian actuated, yes.

Q: Alexis Belakovskiy (AB): What about only having it during weekends, when more people would be walking, so that you could not have it work in rush hour traffic.

A: BS: I don't think I've seen anything like that being used anywhere, not to say that it couldn't happen. The equipment may not be able to handle that, even if you could just tell people that

they could cross only in the weekend. Once you provide the paint, I think people are just going to cross anytime. That's not something we can do.

A: NCC: To back Bob up, in a lot of projects I've worked on, we've looked at the idea of seasonal things. Once you stripe that crosswalk, you're telegraphing that it's the safe to cross. So if you add a crosswalk but add a sign that says only during these hours or only this time of year, it causes a lot of confusion, some of it potentially dangerous.

Q: Elizabeth Bierer (EB): You said it takes 30 seconds, not in this design, but in the other design, for a pedestrian crossing?

A: BS: No, just for that red arrow

C: EB: That doesn't include the time a pedestrian has been waiting to cross.

A: PS: No, I think it was 90 seconds average delay.

C: EB: So, the total would be two minutes.

A: PS: Yes, to make that move, which we're not putting in the design. That's what we're trying to point out here - it would tie up traffic badly.

Q: JD: Why was it asked for?

A: PS: It was more as just a convenience for folks.

Q: AS: I think we're a little confused. 30 seconds versus 90 seconds, what's that?

A: PS: Pedestrian delay is how long it takes when you walk up to a corner, on average. That's pedestrian waiting time. On average they have to wait 90 seconds, because they have to wait for the whole phase to get back to the pedestrian exclusive phase.

Q: AS: Which is the safest way to cross the street, a red arrow or a white crosswalk?

C: PS: The red arrow is currently not provided in the design. It depends on where you're coming from and going to. Say you're coming down this way down Mount Auburn, the first thing you want to cross is this segment, and then this median is about 80 feet long, so you might end up waiting a phase to be able to cross the southbound lanes.

Q: AS: I'm sorry, that was a confusing question. All I'm asking is this: if you had a red arrow to cross, versus the other alternative ways to cross, which is safer to cross for school children, whether they're nineteen years old, or whether they're twelve years old?

A: PS: These show conflicts. This has a right turn conflict – when the cars can go, pedestrian can also go here. We'll probably have a leading pedestrian interval, so they can get out ahead of the cars, so that's a little bit of a conflict, and here's a little bit of a conflict. Otherwise, there are no other moves here that have conflicts. The all-exclusive pedestrian phase would have no conflicts as well.

C: AS: So, the red arrow is safer than the crosswalk…

A: PS: The red arrow could be safer than some of the crosswalks, but there is the issue that the red arrow would mean pedestrians waiting a longer time which tends to tempt some people to try to make a run for it against the light.

Q: BD: What's the delay on those intersections in the final design?

A: PS: We don't have that tonight, but Bob, can you give a taste of it?

A: BS: I honestly don't remember those numbers, but you are moving just about every phase, with the blue arrows. Whereas on the red, you have to wait for your phase to come up, which can only be once every cycle, not once every other cycle, because then you really are waiting.

Q: EB: Aren't you going to get stuck on the median?

A: BS: True, but you'll be doing less waiting than what the exclusive phase would be.

C: EB: People don't wait.

A: PS: Today there are no crosswalks at all. We're trying to provide an improvement on today. Nothing's perfect when there is this much competition for an intersection. We're looking at what an all exclusive phase could be, but cars lose out enormously to the extent that we would be stressing the abutters with congestion. Our plan is trying to balance all the different needs and still get people to where they're going no matter how they're coming through.

C: Bill Warner (BW): I think we have some confusion here because you're graphic show the interweaving pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and it's hard to see.

Q: PS: The actual illustration?

A: BW: Yes. It's a complex interaction, between cars and people, and, at least for me, it's hardtop picture what you're saying.

A: PS: Right. We can make a note of this conversation and come back at the public meeting with some clearer illustrations and maybe we could story line how you walk across the intersection, how long it takes, what the average delay is that for the design. We were just trying to answer one question with this, not explain how everything works. We can illustrate that.

Q: Joanne Bauer (JB): Does the median get any bigger?

A: PS: It is currently six feet wide in this drawing, and I think the ones today are roughly four feet, with one foot a buffer on either side, so it's a little bigger I think. It's a two phase crossing, as opposed to a three phase crossing like it is today. You are able to cross the street faster. We have a little more information on that further in the presentation.

Q: AB: When you cross there right now, all the time it feels so unsafe. I know you were saying four feet but two feet doesn't feel like that much better, because the cars are going fifty miles an hour. Is there any way to make it safer or more wide?

A: PS: Okay. There's a couple reasons we might do that – there's also the bicycle reason, if someone is caught there, and they have a trailer for instance. We can certainly look at that. Make that note: widen the median

C: EB: I've been caught on that little island with people and bicycles and children and you can't even stand on it.

C: Gideon Schreiber (GS): You're separating bicyclists and pedestrians, right, so there's a longer area for both.

A: PS: Yes, there are bicycles and pedestrians side by side, it's like twenty feet long.

C: GS: It wouldn't be really narrow landing - it would be wider, so a bicycle could fit sideways on it.

A: PS: Right, and a trailer could come in sideways on it.

C: AS: You're going to have guardrails around it, and they will take up a lot of space. You can't be there without a guardrail.

A: PS: There would be something protecting you from the traffic. Well definitely take a look at that, and see what we can add to it. Probably what will happen is that extra space will come out of this side of the design.

C: Russ Windman (RW): I want to make two brief points regarding the intersection from a few slides back: Fresh Pond Parkway and Huron Ave. You're talking about raising the intersection, and you mentioned that in general there is no real precedent for raising at a signalized intersection or when it's not a residential street. You said that, by the same token, there's no precedent for opposing it either. My two points would be that that area really is residential, if you look at what's either side of the street, it's all residential. That should be taken into consideration. It's not commercial, it's residential. The other thing, that's a little less quantifiable, is that intersection is a psychological queue to floor it. There's something about when you go through the intersection, people become faster and more aggressive.

Q: PS: Huron or Brattle?

C: RW: Huron. I cross it every day, and I see it every day. There's something about the cues people get when they approach that intersection, especially from the direction of the Water Works. They get there and push and speed, so I just want to make those two points. Psychologically there's something wrong with the area, and it's residential. Note it, and consider it please.

C: AS: Can I make one other comment? I want to say something about speeding at Mount Auburn and Fresh Pond Parkway around the island, where people go 50 miles per hour. The speed limit is 30, but aren't we going to 25?

A: PS: Yes. Rob Lowell wasn't able to make it tonight, but at the prior two meetings agreed that it would be signed for 25.

C: AS: We're all for that. Then there's the issues of can the state police enforce it. How do we design for people to drive more slowly?

A: PS: That's the question we're trying to answer. We want to leave the raised intersection discussion in there for when we get to the next stage of design, so we can do more research, and flesh it out more.

Q: BW: When you do your simulations, does it model the raised intersections?

A: PS: I don't believe so; we don't have Burak here, who's doing the VISSIM analysis, the video.

Q: BW: This is a question about traffic flow: if you slow down, the part that you're talking about being residential is in the Larchwood area. In some way it seems like the speed that cars go by is excessive, there's no purpose, because they will need to slow down at the light anyway. They seem to accelerate on purpose, then decelerate. The question is, if you put a raised platform there, for purpose helping pedestrians, could you kill the speed, which wouldn't hurt anything and dramatically reduce speed and the danger of the curve that's going on.

A: PS: I think that's the idea. Another part of the broader idea is that this a good chunk of this green over here is new parkland, and on the other side as well. We're zipping up the lane widths, because, for people coming south, up here this is ten feet lane widths and narrow historic parkway, and down here, past Brattle, is where in the 1960s they widened it, and opened into the three legged interchanges down by the river. Not only here are we zipping up lanes and creating an intersection that's friendlier for pedestrians, which may actually bring more pedestrians, because it marks the area as slower, but down by the river, we're adding signals. Psychologically if you're going to work every day, coming south, this is Brattle, and down here is where it really opens up, and you start to fly if you have green.

Q: BW: Just to be clear, I think you had a raised crossing at Larch.

A: PS: Oh, you're talking about the raised crosswalk?

C: BW: Yeah, the idea of a raised crosswalk as a way to slow down Fresh Pond Parkway.

A: PS: Certainly. At that juncture, we were concerned about the noise it would create at all times of day and night, and also the sight lines. That's why we're opting to go with a signalized option. Here at the intersections, I think, we have more latitude, and there's a little more tendency to slow down here anyway. Okay, let's try to move forward.

C: AS: Just to emphasize, there's speeding down at Mount Auburn. I use my radar gun and I see people going 50. But there's also speeding off Huron Avenue, toward Brattle, and I do have a radar gun, and I see them go 50. Just because it's so narrow, doesn't slow them down, they want to go fast. We haven't come to grips with that.

A: PS: My take is that they know that the really wide condition is coming.

A: BS: To add to that, I think, I can't remember where in the literature I remember this from, but the median after Brattle gives them the idea no that they can go faster, because there is no opposing traffic same direction. What's the attraction to make them slow down, since there's no

one opposing them – the pedestrian is the only thing that can. The wide median once they get further down, I believe, is giving them the idea that they can go faster.

C: PS: Once they get further down, yeah. At the public meeting we're going to dig more into the fine grain of the comments we've gotten, but this is a taste of the key ones. There's one I wanted to mention, bicycle lanes on Eliot Bridge we wanted to show them in the plan. We've gotten comments on both sides. We will end up showing them with the comments.

I wanted to do a quick review of the vision zero effort that we've been doing with this project, and how we've incorporated the Cambridge Bicycle Plan. This is the Cambridge Bicycle Plan of 2015. Over here you have a key – the purple is the separated bicycle facilities, green is off-street paths. In the plan they're showing separated bicycle facilities for Mount Auburn and Fresh Pond Parkway. We've been doing the best we can to add bicycle lanes to both of these streets. Under the current plan this would become a separated bicycle facility according to the plan, and this section on Mount Auburn would as well.

Q: RW: I can't see where you're pointing – where on Fresh Pond Parkway?

A: PS: Fresh Pond Parkway from Mount Auburn to the river, and connecting to the path. As we've talked about before, Brattle being a two lane street in each direction is a bit calmer. So, if you agree that cyclists might feel more comfortable up there, we're connecting this part of Mount Auburn over to Watertown, to the Greenway and facilities in Watertown. We're connecting folks to Brattle, which connect to this part of the network.

Q: BW: When is that bicycle path going to open?

A: PS: I don't recall at the moment; it's still in design. If Rob Lowell was here, he'd be able to give us a little taste of that.

A: BD: It's funding dependent. It's at about 90% design, but the construction money is the issue. If they get funding soon it could go into construction next fall.

C: PS: That's big, did everyone hear that? If they were to get funding, it could go next fall, but the funding is not for sure. It's at about 90% design stage right now.

The goals of vision zero Cambridge are: eliminate traffic fatalities, improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities, lower vehicles speeds, enforce where the data shows you should, and redesign streets to encourage mobility options. This is just to highlight some things we have done. We've added bicycle facilities down here; improved pedestrian crossings in all directions on

Mount Auburn at Fresh Pond Parkway; improved the bicycle movements on Brattle Street, where there were accidents; we've added bikeways. This is actually an older version of the plan but we've added bikeways, and they're separated for the majority of this section of the street. We've improved some pedestrian crossings here too - getting rid of the merge and adding a signal.

Down by the river, we've vastly improved pedestrian crossings. We've shortened them a great deal in sheer distance and given people more clarity on how to get over there. We've continued the bikeways into this area, although we're still working on getting some more separation over here. It's far more connected than it was before. We've also, in the ways we've talked about, reduced the traffic speeds through design. Right now a lot of this is open, and a lot of the time people fly through the area. The short-term design is still in development. We're having some discussions about that and what it will be. This plan is showing curbs; it might actually be paint and flex posts. We are still doing the bikeway, still getting a lot of the pedestrian improvements, and still reducing the confusion in this intersection by soaking up a lot of the asphalt.

There are also a bunch of changes that the analysis showed us. Maybe this is a good time to go back and review what we found with the road diet.

Okay, so this is the VISSIM test we did of the road diet on Mount Auburn between Brattle and Fresh Pond. We have to wait until it gets over there to see what's going on.

Q: JD: Is that a bus?

A: PS: The yellow vehicles are buses.

C: PS: We do have the other video that will show us how the buses work as well. This is just for the road diet. You'll notice here that no one is driving in that right lane, because it's not there in this design. We didn't take it out in the drawing, but it's not being used.

In this direction, everyone gets to spread out at this intersection. You'll start to see, as we sit here, that this starts to fill up at peak hour.

C: NCC: Regarding what Pete was saying about the lane not existing, you can see the red car that just merged in had to get out of that lane that didn't exist.

C: PS: This is the merge.

Q: BD: What are we looking at?

A: PS: The intersection at Brattle is holding all this up.

Q: BD: So it's not Aberdeen?

C: PS: It starts at Brattle – you have one lane coming into the Brattle intersection. The signal can't get as many people through at each cycle. That's why the queue differences are so big on our two illustrations you saw earlier.

C: GS: Even if you took time away from Brattle, it's because two lanes of traffic are going into one lane of travel.

A: PS: Ye; the intersection can't process as many vehicles with just one lane. Another thing to note is that this animation assumes is that everyone's good - looking to see that they won't block traffic when they come through the intersection.

C: AS: That's the law

C: Nina Coslov (NC): When you do the simulation that also includes the T of Brattle Street, correct? The other thing to look at is what will happen on Brattle coming in from Harvard Square. I think that will back way up.

A: PS: Yeah. Let's go ahead and show the video of the proposed Mount Auburn Corridor, because that shows it as well. I'm not going to be able to go into as much detail as Burak does, but the road diet begins here, on this side, so there's one lane of traffic. The bus is able to clear. Here, buses are white and yellow. Here you have the left lane back for cars. This is Brattle, where you have the intersection which is clear, but then people have to go to the left to avoid the bus lane. In real life this won't be so severe.

C: AS: In real life, Brattle is much more crowded.

A: GS: This is AM peak right?

C: NC: That's what I was saying.

C: PS: Yes, this is AM peak. What makes this work is that as people line up to go through the Mount Auburn at Fresh Pond Parkway intersection, they have a lot of space to spread out. The bus gets a jump but then people can fill in around it, so they're ready to go and this intersection still processes a lot of traffic.

Q: AS: Do you have a PM video?

A: PS: No, we didn't animate the PM analysis yet.

C: GS: That's the question Nina is raising. The PM at Brattle traffic is the concern

A: BS: Pete, if I could provide a little insight. Today, you have a stop controlled intersection – people have to find a gap to get in. If we put a signal there, it will only be two phases: anyone taking the left onto Brattle and people coming out of Brattle taking a right can move at the same time, and then the through movements are going. Those are the two movements. The right turn will actually have enough time to get out, compared to today, when you have to find a gap and can't. As long as the progression westbound is normal, the Brattle right turn should not back up as much as it does today. It's dependent on the progression on Mount Auburn.

C: NC: You're saying you'll save time because you don't have to wait to merge back in.

A: BS: Yes, you'll have your own green time to get onto Mount Auburn.

A: PS: Yes, and out of that change you also get the benefits for bicyclists and pedestrians. We saw there were a lot of crashes happening from the merge through Road Safety Audit, and had a lot of support to get rid of the merge maybe for that reason.

Q: JB: I have a question. You're showing the VISSIM stuff with the road diet. Is the road diet in the current plan?

A: PS: There are road diets on top of road diets. By adding the transit lane, we're doing a road diet, because we're getting rid of a travel lane. Also, between Homer and Aberdeen, we actually did a road diet for a bicycle lane on either side to help make the facilities consistent.

Q: JB: So you have the Brattle and Mount Auburn merge, but won't you have a merge when two lanes turn into one, farther west? Aren't you just moving merge further down?

A: PS: There will still be problems. Two lanes traveling alongside each other merging is less dangerous than another street coming in and merging, in terms of crash statistics. You see more crashes when two streets are coming together, because it can sometimes be blind.

Q: JB: If you're going westbound where do two lanes go into one?

A: PS: It does that after Aberdeen. It's not a merge because there is a right turn lane and a through lane at the intersection.

C: JB: Oh, okay.

C: PS: I don't think there's any two lane to one merges. The only one I can think of is the eastbound one as the bus lane starts.

C: GS: I think before you showed further eastbound near Coolidge going from two to one lane.

A: PS: Yeah, when we showed the road diet video. That's where we were showing what doesn't work with traffic.

C: JB: Oh, you were showing that to say it doesn't work. Okay, it looked like it didn't work. Nevermind.

C: PS: Okay. There were some other changes we made based on analysis, many of which are down by river. We're trying to figure out this intersection, because when we started looking at the VISSIM results, it didn't work – there were a lot of tie-ups over this way. The first thing we were worried about was this turning lane. It didn't seem long enough to handle the traffic, so we changed the geometry quite a bit, to lengthen that turning lane. That helped with that problem, but the intersection still doesn't process as much traffic. We also added another through lane that comes through the Memorial Drive intersection from the other side and then turns into a turning lane over here. That helps store cars for the trip across the bridge. But the intersection still doesn't perform quite as well as the existing three legged interchanges, which are more highway oriented.

Q: EB: Is that a new parking lot?

A: PS: No, that's a landscaping feature; we'll talk about that in a minute. Actually, while we're waiting for this to load, we can pop back into the presentation for a minute. I skipped over all the good stuff.

We tried to hand out a flyer at the November 14th meeting to get some feedback on what to put in this new green space. We got a little feedback and some comments through sticky notes on the bigger plans. We went with the basic landscaping treatment, including a community garden and space that could be conceived of as a fitness space, similar to what they have on the other side of the river in Allston. That's really popular with folks as a place to do pull-ups and things. Or, it could be something else if you conceive of anything. There will be landscaping here and we

wanted to show something as the concept goes forward. We can certainly take your comments on that going forward.

To go over the landscape plan, the only places where we changed a lot were at Brattle and over by Star Market, and along Fresh Pond Parkway, in the residential section, where we added trees that have been lost over time.

Here's the Memorial Drive intersection up here, and here's the design we were just discussing, with Greenough coming in and the Eliot Bridge. We're going to go off the chart to see how long the traffic queue starts to get.

Q: Representative Jonathan Hecht (JH): Is that PM or AM?

A: PS: PM

C: PS: Before questions, since there's an animation going here, let me just finish explaining this. The queue extends to here, and we start to get a problem here. Luckily, there's a lot of storage over across the river, which does help out. Basically we want to establish by showing you guys this, is that we haven't really solved all the problems. This could be something in a further stage of design where we start to look at diversion. There are a bunch of projects that look at diversion, such as McGrath Highway in Somerville, where they are considering that if they change the design of the roadway, people might take other routes. Casey Arborway is another example. When you do that it's useful to do things like a license plate study, to better understand the origins and destinations of traffic, and see how people might change their behavior. This is a new and emerging science, it's not exact, but this would help us get a sense of what other options people might have, so that you can make an estimate about what percentage of people might take another route. You can then compare that to something like this and see where the traffic queues would end up.

Q: BD: Where does the traffic queue currently go to?

A: PS: The nature of the queueing today is different. There is a queue for the signal to go further west towards Newton, but you don't see much of a queue going to Cambridge.

Q: JG: Is that significantly worse because of some change?

A: PS: This is because of the two-T design. Right now, you have the three legged interchanges. Those are efficient; they organize traffic very well. Of course, the problem is that you can't cross

the street: there are three phase crossings, and a lot of cases of speeding, etc. We're trying to pull back the throttle (as Nate would say) on the cars, to give benefits to pedestrians and bicycles.

Q: BD: Currently?

A: PS: Not currently, no.

Q: BD: Where does the queue currently extend to?

A: PS: Currently, there's not much of a queue. I don't know if you recall what it was in the existing condition, Bob?

A: BS: I don't remember the numbers, but it's not extensive as this, definitely.

A: PS: My experience is the queue starts to picks up at Mount Auburn today.

Q: GS: If there's no queue now, how long does it take to go through that section now versus the proposed condition in the PM peak? Do you have an indication of how much longer it will take?

A: PS: We haven't pulled that out, but we will pull it out for the public meeting. Our thinking on this is that we're not going to be able to solve this question under the scope of the current study. We would try to solve it in part at 25% design.

Q: JG: Could this be because when you're coming off Eliot Bridge and turning right towards Memorial Drive you don't need to stop today, and only if you're going left towards Greenough there's a light? And now everyone stops?

A: PS: That's one reason, correct. You could probably cite some other reasons as well.

C: NCC: To underscore the point you're trying to make here: I looked at the video and I thought that it's the trade that we were asked to make. Pete pulled language right out of my mouth: right now that intersection has it's car throttle at 100, and the bicycle pedestrian throttle is at 15 at best, and we're trying to balance that out. That has some impacts, and because you are our stakeholder group, we're being upfront and honest with you on what the impacts are. That will probably be the jumping off point for looking at those intersections, and saying is that acceptable. Pete mentioned the Casey Arborway Project. One of things we found there is that the viaduct we removed was contributing to a "hurry up and wait" situation. I do a lot of meetings that require me to head west on Soldiers Field Road, and it's great, I do a bit of flying through that intersection, where there's a bit of congestion, but I get up around the IHOP and I hurry up

and wait. The question becomes are we creating a real problem, or are we breaking up the waiting. Rather than getting all the way to the intersection of Fresh Pond Parkway at Mount Auburn, and wait, maybe you do some waiting earlier. Those are the kinds of things we'll be getting into as we take the concept to 25% Design. Again, we are being upfront with you

C: EB: Correct me if I'm wrong, but if you're going along the river on a bicycle, you have to go down an underpass. There's no crosswalk, and it's often filed with water.

A: NCC: Yes, it can be quite nasty after it rains.

C: PS: I can see the corollary between this project and the Casey Arborway that Nate was talking about. You're coming along, fly over the bridge, come through past Memorial Drive, and if you're turning left on Mount Auburn, you get caught up there and it's pretty bad until you get through to Brattle. That's the "hurry up and wait" condition like Nate was talking about, so maybe we can have some waiting earlier. I do think we're talking about diversion of traffic to make this one work. That can happen with people choosing other routes but also choosing a different time to go home.

C: AS: The summary, I would say, is we're talking about where the waiting occurs; whether it's up-front or whether it happens along the way where it does not today.

A: PS: It doesn't occur at Eliot Bridge now. I'm saying that we would spread that weight, but also, it won't be able to process as much traffic

C: AS: To go one step further, it's taken us 50 years to find the representatives to the State House to find the money to do this study. This study has not been done for the last 50 years, and now these communities along this corridor have been bearing the brunt of the traffic more and more. I'm not sure why we say today that we need to keep flow. Maybe we should be saying that its some earlier level of flow that's reasonable because these residential communities including Watertown which needs better bus service has been suffering from traffic that has been accumulated all these years from neglect.

A: NCC: I think that's kind of what we're saying.

C: AS: I'm not sure balance you're suggesting if one that we would support.

C: EB: We have the view and the noise and the crashes, and we need the ability to cross the street.

C: GS: I'm not sure they're saying that.

A: PS: We're not saying that we need to fix this; we're saying we need to study diversion to make sure. There's a certain amount of diversion in the traffic engineering community so far that is acceptable. There are ways of proving it, or creating an argument around it. That's why we would need something like a license plate study to build the case. Otherwise, if you don't have that, the project is vulnerable to attack from people who live further north, and say that this will tie up traffic.

C: AS: In ten or fifteen years there will be more traffic anyway, there will be more tie-ups anyway. The whole point is: what's the *rebalance* of all the burdens of the traffic that is reasonable for the neighborhoods.

A: PS: I think were on the same track.

C: NC: I think there's an implicit assumption on whether this is an artery that has to be dealt with as a commuting artery, or we're trying to make it not one. Whether we're trying to accommodate something that's there, or divert it because we don't want it anymore.

A: PS: That's the crux of the debate. We're here to try to balance that because I don't think it would be politically viable to eliminate this as an artery, and make Fresh Pond Parkway a street like Brattle or something, but there are ways to mitigate the amount of traffic that's coming through here. In the old days, people always built wider roads. These days, people are interested in making every place we are at a good place. That's a newer trend, and that's what we're trying to go for. Does that answer your question?

C: NC: Sort of. If I was starting this project over and thinking about those guidelines and principles would be from the beginning. That's the debate about what the goal is: whether it's an artery or we're trying to make it a street that goes through a neighborhood, is really pivotal to all these decisions – how we choose treatments, what we're optimizing for.

A: PS: Absolutely. I don't know if I speak for everyone, but I think a lot of people would like to see traffic go way down, in this room. But, then there's the rest of the state and the governor. We have to come up with a plan that everyone here is very supportive of, that faces the reality of the traffic needs for everyone else as well. We can't build a wall here and say don't come through our neighborhood. You can say that we want a calmer neighborhood; we want our kids to be able to walk across the street and those sorts of things. What we're trying to do is create that balance in the roadway, where people can walk across the street, bicycle through the corridor, and also get to work.

C: NCC: To really hammer home the point: fifteen years ago we would've run the simulation like that and decided not to even show it, and would've said that it's impossible. We are being very upfront. That's a big part of project, and it will be expensive. You might wind up in a situation where MassDOT becomes a partner. MassDOT will want to know all the things that Pete has been talking about: what does the diversion look like; how long will it take. MassDOT of today is much more comfortable than Mass Highway was in prior decades or even MassDOT was a few years ago with the idea that we can say this isn't as much of a car corridor as it once was, and we're okay making things a little worse for cars and better for everyone else. We're just being upfront with you. We can be okay with that queue stretching back, but it will probably be an important starting point in the next phase of design. It will come up and we would be irresponsible not to dig deeper into it. We just want to let you know that that's there.

C: AS: I think I would agree with some of that language. I would add to it the larger picture – the environment where many of us feel that in the future there will be fewer cars and more multiple commuter vehicles. We're beginning toward that in so far we're proposing the bus lane.

C: PS: Right. That's a revolution depending on so many factors, automated vehicles being one. It's going to get pretty weird in the next ten years. I do want to get through the rest of the presentation though.

I wanted to talk about Mount Auburn Street and the transit benefits. We're thinking about this street, as you all mentioned at the beginning of this study, as a people mover versus a car mover.

We showed this to you before, but I've been working to make it better, more digestible. From Belmont to Homer, the split is about 2% of the vehicles are MBTA, but they carry about 44% of the people through this street. Then on Brattle to Coolidge Avenue, you have 3% vehicles being the T (since so many cars pull off at Brattle), and then they're carrying 56% of the people. When you start to look at the transit infrastructure, this is where bus lane and queue jumps are. So, when we talk about speeding that up significantly, we're talking about speeding up half the people on the street. So, you will see some car delays as part of this, but you're actually getting more people through the street faster, overall. The people delay is going down. We haven't calculated that fully for you yet, we're working on that still.

We wanted to show you some of the times more clearly. This is from the new design, with the bus lane removed between Homer and Aberdeen. In the AM peak, in the eastbound direction, for the bus we're getting 2.4 minutes faster, and we do have a consequence on the other side of the street – it gets 44 seconds slower westbound, but overall the route is still faster. In the 90th percentile, which is what the T uses to figure out scheduling, the bus is 3.7 minutes faster, and 34 seconds

slower on the other side. The total round trip travel time savings for buses are 1.6 minutes faster on average, and 3.2 minutes faster in the 90th percentile.

Another thing we want to show for the public is what that 3.2 minutes means for the frequency of the buses. If you have more frequent buses, more people will choose to ride – this is well proven in the data. We can actually predict (somewhat) what affect this will have on ridership.

In the PM peak, it's a little less dramatic because the tie ups are not as big. 19 seconds faster on average and 45 seconds faster at the 90th percentile.

For auto travel time, while we do have actual benefit in the eastbound direction in the AM peak, we do get slower on Fresh Pond Parkway, and in the westbound direction, as well as slower overall in the PM peak for cars. There is a consequence. But when you think in terms of people delay, it's an overall benefit. For pedestrians on the Fresh Pond Parkway at Mount Auburn intersection, in the eastbound direction people are able to cross 59 seconds faster, and in the westbound direction they're able to cross 51 seconds faster.

I had lined up the benefits of the project. We don't necessarily have to look at that. Since we're getting close to 8:00pm now, we can have some more discussion.

C: Mark Peterson (MP): I just wanted to mention that I love the improved bus speed, but in terms of actually putting more buses for the 71 and 73, the T claims that they're very limited by the fact that there are a limited number of electric buses and qualified drivers. That's what they told us when we talked to them about potentially increasing the amount of service.

A: PS: More frequency need not require new buses and drivers – you would just get the buses and drivers through the route faster. Whether or not we could add an additional bus to the route is a different question.

C: GS: If the buses are going faster, you could maybe get more service, right?

A: Phil Groth (PG): By reducing the variability we'd be getting more effective use out of the buses we have. Instead of seeing three buses in a row they'd be better dispersed throughout the route.

C: PS: Transit lanes make it a lot more reliable in terms of spacing and operations. Are there any other questions?

C: AS: Just to summarize: there is one bus every three minutes scheduled from Watertown or the Belmont line to Harvard Square. There are enough buses that its three minutes apiece.

C: PG: Combined between the 71 and 73.

C: AS: They aren't performing at the level right now, because they're all backed up.

A: PS: This would allow improved frequency not only on the little bit of corridor but also on the rest of the route.

Let's do a little bit of the benefit round op. We addressed the Road Safety Audit items; we calmed traffic (or at least we think we will); reduced vehicle speeds; reduced conflicts between vehicles and across modes, certainly; eliminated the Brattle merge which was noted on the RSA in particular; improved clarity of markings and operations at the intersections; and the left turns off Fresh Pond Parkway will be addressed with signage and a little bit of design at the median there. There will actually be new signals overhead, which would make clearer that that left is not allowed.

We got 4.5 acres of new parkland, including 1.6 acres that could be programmed. We improved the connections to the river for bicycles and pedestrians; calmed traffic again; and this bridges over Gerry's Landing, connecting the neighborhood and improving safety.

We saw a lot of pedestrian benefits at Fresh Pond Parkway at Mount Auburn and down by the river. The crossing distance was reduced by 65 feet, and we've equaled the playing field for mobility choices out there. We also reduced conflicts. Bicycle network is enhanced, as I pointed out with the Cambridge Bicycle Plan; it reduces conflicts. Here at Belmont, one example is that there were a lot of complaints about the right turn impeding bicyclists going straight. Bicycles now can come to a bicycle box if they're continuing forward and enter the bicycle lane condition, or they can take a right no matter what's happening over here. They're totally safe from the cars. This is a review of the Cambridge Bicycle Plan.

We went over the transit benefits. Going back to the Shared Goals, in blue are those that relate to Vision Zero as well. We've addressed a lot of this stuff.

This is the short term plan as it stood. We haven't touched it in a while to be honest with you, versus the long term plan which has been developed quite a bit. Right now, as we come toward the end of the project, we're starting to talk about what we can do in the short term versus the long term. We conceived of some of this as cement but we're also looking at whether we can do this with paint and flex posts, in order to get the transit benefits, and some of the bicycle and pedestrian crossing benefits a little earlier, as the bigger construction project will take a while to finish. Then, to get the bigger construction project going, we're starting to talk to the MBTA

about the catenary, and how difficult that would be to move, which is required for some of this. That's so we can determine how the project might go forward in the future.

I just wanted to let you all know that those discussions are going on. None of that is really resolved but we hope to do some short term action items.

Q: AS: Can we do bus lane tomorrow?

A: PS: The bus lane could stand alone. We haven't tested it without any improvements whatsoever in the intersection. The intersection is more efficient than it was when you close it up and change the signal timing. The pedestrians can cross faster because of the short distances, and the cars can clear faster, because of the shorter distance between the stop bars. While we haven't tested it, it probably would have some benefits on its own.

C: AS: Tomorrow.

A: PS: Like I said, we are working towards short term actions, and certainly that's very high on our list.

Q: EB: Could you show us the long term for this intersection? Thank you

Q: PS: Any other questions?

Q: RW: I just have a comment. You guys laid out the constraints to us. We understand that you can't solve all the problems because the volume makes the problem. The volume will get worse over the next ten to fifteen years because that's going beyond the problems that engineering can solve and needs planning for more regional projects. I'm wondering - I know you guys have your bread and butter to look at but would you ever put language in your final report saying this is as much as can be done. We need to take down the catenaries and modernize transportation and then we can fix the street a little better. We need to get people used to the idea that they need to feel the pain of single occupancy vehicles. You guys are kind of getting squeezed. Would that language ever get into your final report?

A: PS: We can certainly note the neighborhood desires for lowered traffic and even the desire to find different options for people on the Fresh Pond corridor. That's certainly worth doing. I think we would put it in that context. That doesn't mean that we'll relegate it to the back or anything, but we can note it in the report as a community concern and desire.

C: RW: That's good. I'm also saying that the first step is necessary. You need the engineering data. But for the people who look around and come to these things for funding, they need to see that the problem is bigger than engineering.

A: PS: Certainly, I do think that's recognized.

A: NCC: Without a DCR person like Rob, who has been with us all along in the room, I don't want to put words in their mouth. The issue becomes there are certain things that as a consultant its okay to say and write in a report, but to state it as baldly as "we've done everything we can from an engineering perspective and to do anything better there must be a broader conversation at regional and state planning level" – that's a decision that DCR would need to make. They would want to state that, rather than have that come from a consultant. Theoretically if you got a different consultant, you could've had a firm that was more auto-minded. That's positioning for the agency.

A: PS: Everyone recognizes the challenges. It's not putting on anyone. You have to go way up the chain to figure out who's going to solve the transportation problems of America.

C: RW: Thanks, I just wanted to note that.

A: NCC: It's understood, and we'll get such of it as we can.

Q: PS: Anyone else have any last comments, particularly anyone who hasn't spoken yet tonight?

Q: BW: When you send out the pdf of this presentation, can you make a higher quality? Someone said you have to make it a really little file, and it gets hard to look at.

A: NCC: That's me. What I'll do for all of you, is that I'll send out a pdf of this that is full size for the stakeholder group. This is an enormous file. To make that happen, I will have to use file share protocol, so you're going to have to put in your email address so I know who's downloading it. That will be from me; it will be a full resolution file. The reason I send the little one is so you all don't have to share all your data with me, but I'll do it this time.

C: AB: Are you interested in a work around for that? I do some of that for work.

C: PS: Why don't you guys talk after about that? I just want to put a quick plug in for the public meeting on the 31st. Do invite your neighbors, please talk to your neighbors about the work on the stakeholder group that we've put in, and please be there as well to help us explain the plan.

C: RW: Thank you guys.

Next Steps

The final public meeting for the Mount Auburn Street Corridor Study will be held on January 31st, 2017 from 6-8pm at Shady Hill School's Assembly Hall. The goal for that session will be to lay out the finalized concept plan for the community at large and take public comment.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Joanne	Bauer	Stakeholder Group
Alexis	Belakovskiy	Stakeholder Group
Stacey	Beuttell	Stakeholder Group
Elizabeth	Bierer	Stakeholder Group
Hannah	Brockhaus	Howard Stein Hudson
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard Stein Hudson
Nina	Coslov	Stakeholder Group
Bill	Deignan	Stakeholder Group
Jan	Devereux	Stakeholder Group
Jill	Forney	Stakeholder Group
Arcady	Goldmints-Orlov	Stakeholder Group
Janice	Gould	Stakeholder Group
Phil	Groth	Stakeholder Group
Jonathan	Hecht	Stakeholder Group
Mark	Peterson	Stakeholder Group
Katherine	Rafferty	Stakeholder Group
Gideon	Schreiber	Stakeholder Group
Arthur	Strang	Stakeholder Group
Russ	Windman	Community Member

Appendix 2: Received Comments

From: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 9:06 AM
To: Kounelis, Angeline; McLean, MaryCatherine (DCR)
Cc: Hannah Brockhaus; Pete Stidman; Fiesinger, Anne (DCR); Driscoll, Michael; Magoon, Steven; William Brownsberger; Jonathan Hecht; Town Councilors
Subject: RE: Mt. Auburn St. Corridor Study Stakeholder Meeting

Good Morning All,

I hope this note finds everyone well and having a good day. These comments will appear as part of the minutes of the 11/14/16 meeting.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

From: Kounelis, Angeline
Sent: Tuesday, January 03, 2017 6:17 PM
To: McLean, MaryCatherine (DCR)
Cc: Hannah Brockhaus; Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis; Pete Stidman; Fiesinger, Anne (DCR); Driscoll, Michael; Magoon, Steven; William Brownsberger; Jonathan Hecht; Town Councilors
Subject: RE: Mt. Auburn St. Corridor Study Stakeholder Meeting

Happy New Year to all! Best wishes for a New Year to be filled with lots of good health, happiness and prosperity for you and yours.

Mary Catherine, just to advise, I will be unable to attend the meeting on 01/10/17. The second and fourth Tuesdays of the month are the regularly scheduled meetings for the Watertown Town Council.

There is one comment that I must offer, specific to the metered street parking in the area of Star Market and the adjoining stores, fronting on Mt. Auburn St. in Cambridge. There have been plans showing the possible reduction in the number of street parking spaces. The rationale was given that the Star Market parking lot would adequately serve the needs of all the customers patronizing the stores.

The Team at DCR and Stakeholders may not be aware that customers of businesses located on the Watertown side of Mt. Auburn and Belmont Streets also utilize the public metered spaces and walk to their destinations in Watertown. Parking in the Star Market private property parking lot is restricted to their customers; vehicles will be towed during, and after business hours.

Municipal parking is at a premium in the entire area. For a small business to survive and prosper, public parking must be available and preserved. I hope serious consideration will be given to my concerns before plans are finalized to eliminate parking spaces. Thank you.

All the best,

Angie

Angeline B. Kounelis

District A, East End, Town Councilor
Town of Watertown