From: Charlotte M [mailto:cmao64@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, February 09, 2018 4:25 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc: Cerbone, James (DOT); nwishinsky@brookelinema.gov; bfranco@brooklinema.gov; nheller@brooklinema.gov; bgreene@brooklinema.gov; hhamilton@brooklinema.gov; tkirrane@brooklinema.gov
Subject: Proposed Malvern St connection for I-90 Allston Interchange project

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attn: Alex Streaky, MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, 9th floor
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Beaton:

I have lived on Crowninshield Road in north Brookline for 15 years and write to express my grave concern over plans being considered as part of the Allston I-90 Interchange Project to create new north/south connections for vehicles between a new Cambridge Street and Commonwealth Ave via Malvern Street and/or Babcock St and other connecting roads. In particular, I strongly oppose any plan in which general purpose traffic would use such a north/south connection, even if it is originally designed for transit only use. CM-1

The DEIR estimates 15,000-20,000 vehicles per day would use this new, widened Malvern Street, i.e. a mind-blowing 830% to 1026% increase in traffic during peak hours of use. As the DEIR acknowledges, this plan would "run a high volume of vehicles past owner-occupied homes on Ashford Street, and filter a significant volume of traffic down small, residential streets in North Brookline, including Babcock Street and Pleasant Street". The report furthermore notes that this is "out of keeping with instruction given to MassDOT by the Task Force to protect residential streets from cut-through traffic."

While I sympathize with Allston residents of Linden Street and businesses on Harvard Street that currently bear much of the brunt of north/south traffic between Cambridge Street and Commonwealth Avenue, it would be unacceptable to divert large amounts of traffic from those areas to Malvern and Babcock Streets for the following reasons:

- Traffic concerns of residential neighborhoods should take precedence, I feel, over entirely commercial areas such as the Harvard St area of Allston. Both Babcock and Pleasant Streets in north Brookline are almost entirely residential roads. It simply is not right to "sacrifice" a residential neighborhood to cut-through traffic of such magnitude, essentially "transferring the pain" of a commercial area onto a residential neighborhood.

- Dramatic increases in cut-through traffic would be unsafe for pedestrians of all ages who stroll along these residential roads. In particular, many children walk unattended along Babcock and Pleasant Streets and surrounding roads to the local Edward Devotion School, Brookline's largest K-8 elementary school with 1000 students. This would correspond to peak AM traffic hours when there would be a shocking estimated 830% increase in Malvern Street traffic (from 115 vehicles per hour to 1,070 vph). Much of this traffic would undoubtedly spill over to Babcock and Pleasant Streets and surrounding north Brookline residential roads, creating safety hazards for children as rush hour drivers make their way to, for example, Longwood Medical Area or the Fenway commercial area.

- During snowstorms, Pleasant Street cannot safely accomodate more traffic than it already gets. When there is even a mild buildup of snow, vehicles can travel one-way only for significant stretches; cars must wait for traffic coming in the opposite direction to clear in order to have enough room to proceed.

- Cars commonly back up at both the north and south ends of Pleasant Street. At the north end, this occurs due to heavy pedestrian traffic at the intersection with Commonwealth Ave, limiting the number of cars on Pleasant St that can turn eastbound at the traffic light onto Comm Ave, along with there being multiple entry/exit points for vehicles packed into the end portion of Pleasant Street as it approaches Commonwealth Ave (i.e. intersections with Adams and Dummer Roads and access to/from Sullivan Tires). Too often, there simply is not enough room for so many entering and exiting vehicles on top of regular traffic on this narrow road, creating gridlock.

- This results in traffic jams not only for northbound traffic on Pleasant Street but also traffic on Commonwealth Ave travelling eastbound and southbound onto Pleasant Street, particularly when there are events at Agganis Arena. Each day, eastbound cars on Comm Ave try to avoid the backed-up traffic light intersection at Pleasant Street by turning

illegally onto one-way Crowninshield Road, travelling the wrong way and, often, dangerously fast. Better “Do Not Enter” signage is needed at the intersection with Crowninshield Road to clearly indicate the road is one-way and to prevent cars from entering from Comm Ave.

If a north/south Malvern St. connection is created for transit only, I feel the road should be configured in such a way that any north- or southbound vehicles must access Malvern Street via a direct feed into future bus station bays at West Station (rather than via direct connections to Malvern Street proper). I believe this would be the best way to accomodate the need for improved bus transit connections at a future West Station while not overwhelming residential areas of North Brookline with unacceptable increases in cut-through traffic and creating chronic massive traffic jams on Commonwealth Avenue.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Mao
35 Crowninshield Road
Brookline, MA 02446

cc:
MassDOT Highway Division
Environmental Services Section
Attn: James Cerbone
10 Park Plaza, Room 4260

Members of Town of Brookline's Select Board
Neil Wishinsky
Ben Franco
Nancy Heller
Bernard Greene
Heather Hamilton

Town of Brookline Transportation Board
via Transportation Division administrator, Todd Kirrane

From: Charlotte Wagner <charlotte@wfound.org>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2018 2:59 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc: comments@walkboston.org
Subject: Support for a thoughtful Mass Pike project

Dear Mr. Strysky,

I am a resident of Cambridge and a business owner in Boston. I support the positions of WalkBoston and the Charles River Conservancy with respect to the Mass Pike project near Allston/Cambridge. The government and citizens have an amazing opportunity to replace the failing viaduct with a roadway that can allow for more access to the river while reducing the cost of construction. CWAG-1

I believe that the Mass Pike project near Allston/Cambridge must include:

- Regional rail and crosstown bus connections are essential. CWAG-2
- People must have walking and biking access to the river and across the project area. CWAG-3
- Charles River paths must be safe and separated for walkers/runners/cyclists. CWAG-4

Please focus this project beyond replacement of the highway, and include the elements above to make Boston, Cambridge and Allston a more livable cities.

Feel free to contact me for further.

Sincerely, Charlotte Wagner

Charlotte R Cramer Wagner
Founder & CEO

WAGNER FOUNDATION
Building Just & Robust Communities
Mobile 617-875-2043 Tel. 617-868-0920
wfound.org

From: Dana Busch <dana.busch@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2018 5:59:37 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: Comment on the Allston I90 resdesign project

Secretary Matthew Beaton,
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Attn: MEPA Office
Alexander Strysky, EEA#15278
100 Cambridge St., #900, Boston MA 02114

alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

Dear Secretary Beaton, *I agree with the below comments from the People's Pike coalition. Their recommendations are professional, forward-thinking, and very reasonable. I've added a personal introduction, and comments below in bold.

I'm a 36-year-old interactive designer and I've lived in neighborhoods throughout Cambridge, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and Fenway for the past 12 years. I've never owned a personal automobile here. I rely on walking, sharing, and transit-oriented urban mobility within our limited urban geometry. But mobility is more difficult for all of us than it needs to be, given last century's ongoing legacy of highway design that attempts to improve mobility by accommodating more cars. The poor transportation planning and land use problems of the suburbs and beyond, and the
speed, noise, pollution, and physical threats created by SOV commuter traffic from MassDOT's Pike
are negatively affecting my life here in our city. It negatively impacts me on
my street, in our parks, in my ability to concentrate and be productive at work, and in my home. How bad is it? I work from home now instead of trying to bike or take the T at rush hour, and I have to run white noise machines all the time so I can't hear cars and trucks speeding by.
This is an equity issue.
Consider that there are no urban parks here where one can go without the stress and threat of noise and pollution from motor vehicles. Cities like Paris, San Francisco, and Seoul are setting a precedent for highway downgrading and removal. Even my home city of Buffalo, NY is downgrading the 198 Expressway through Delaware Park into a 30mph urban parkway, restoring Olmsted's vision. Our future is one with healthier public space, improved mobility for all, and far fewer personal vehicles, and there's no sense in investing $1 billion of taxpayer money into a highway plan that doesn't contribute to that vision.

I believe there are additional actions that can be taken within the scope of this project and beyond to greatly improve quality of life for those of us who live in the neighborhoods here and use the Charles River Basin for commuting and recreation on foot, bike, and wheelchair. I'd also like to see MassDOT take action by collaborating at the regional level to reduce SOV congestion at Allston-Cambridge. A systems approach to reducing overall

VMT and especially commuter car trips is needed so that we can reduce the speed, size, and negative impact of the Mass Pike and Storrow Drive here in Boston and Cambridge. I believe that leadership on this is within MassDOT's Mobility Management and Congestion Management responsibilities. I will be supportive of a revised design that prioritizes urban mobility for all above single-occupancy cut-through traffic. My notes are below in bold.

The reconstruction of the Mass Pike in Allston will define our region for decades to come. There must be major transformations of Massachusetts' transportation system to make it far more climate-friendly, socially equitable, and suited to the 21st century economy, and Allston must show a bold commitment to these changes. Unfortunately, the project as currently proposed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) fails to do so. I therefore ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR to address these deficiencies and study the items described below.

Under the Global Warming Solutions Act, Massachusetts must cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 emissions levels by 2020 and at least an 80% reduction by 2050. I appreciate that in 2017 you and MassDOT Secretary Pollack held a series of listening sessions to discuss reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector While the Allston DEIR is an improvement over the existing dreadful conditions, it recreates an outdated 20th-century car-centered transportation system incompatible with such a reduction in emissions. DB-1

The DEIR is also inconsistent with the CIty of Boston's Imagine Boston 2030 and Go Boston 2030 plans and the Boston Planning and Redevelopment Agency's I-90 Allston Placemaking Study. While it is commendable that the MBTA is in the process of launching a Commuter Rail Vision Study, it is unacceptable that MassDOT's Allston DEIR perpetuates out-dated thinking (using valuable acres of urban land for rail layup) while it should instead support better mid-day service, construction of West Station in the first phase, and steps to move forward with passenger service on the Grand Junction. DB-2 DB-3-5

What the Allston I-90 must do is create a 21st-century network of transit by bus, rail, and bike that also dramatically improves active transportation in the Charles River Parklands. I ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR to address these issues:

1.
2. Build
3. West Station with two-track service in the first phase of the project DB-6
4.
5.
6. Rebuild
7. the highway at-grade in the "throat" using the A Better City (ABC) concept DB-7
8.
9.
10. Reduce

the number of lanes in streets throughout the proposed urban grid to create a safer environment more conducive to walking and biking. DB-8

Study

how separate paths for biking and walking can be provided in the entire section of Charles River Parkland from the River Street Bridge to the BU Bridge, including the "throat", for all viaduct and at-grade options. This study should include consideration of DB-9

a boardwalk (both temporarily during construction and as a permanent structure) and the use of fill, and how to mitigate impacts on the river by restoring today's degraded bank into a "living shoreline" of native vegetation. Consider how this can be done both DB-10

as part of the I-90 project or in a subsequent project.

Construct DB-11

new footbridges near Agganis Way and Amory Street that cross over the highway and link Commonwealth Ave in Boston and Brookline to the Charles River parkland to further encourage commutes by bike.

Introduce DB-12

new North-South bus routes that cross over the highway and connect North Allston and Commonwealth Ave, and by extension Harvard Square and Longwood.

Fully

evaluate the possibility of shifting the rail lines away from the abutting homes and creating an at-grade, off-road walk/bike path from the Regina Pizzeria end of Harvard Ave to West Station and over the at-grade highway to the Charles River. A simple barrier DB-13

wall is insufficient mitigation for the Environmental Justice community that is so heavily burdened by the air pollution, noise pollution, and vibration impacts of the highway and rail. DB-14

Study

how to upgrade the Grand Junction railroad linking West Station, Kendall Sq. and North Station, and enhance the Grand Junction Bridge to become a walk/bike connection between the Charles River parkland in Cambridge and Boston. DB-15

Evaluate

38. increasing off-peak commuter rail service between Worcester and Boston—obviating the need to build a layover area to store idle trains in Allston. DB-16

39.

My additional comments:

- **Helen and James Storrow stated the Charles River Reservation land should not be used for car traffic.** Access to a restored Charles River is more important than being able to speed in a car.

  While I admire the effort put into the improved design solution for the "Throat" by Sasaki Associates, with the boardwalk and fill extension into the river to improve the experience for pedestrians, this design feels like Stockholm Syndrome to me. We can do much better than this. Two highways next to a vital pedestrian and bike route and recreation destination is poor 20th century design that prioritizes SOV cut-through traffic over my health and well-being on the path. The Charles is nowhere near its potential, but that can change. Today, Storrow Drive Tunnel has structural issues, Bowker Overpass also needs to come down rather than being rebuilt, and infamously excessive speed on Storrow cannot even be enforced properly due to the lack of pull-over lanes.

  The Esplanade is not at all peaceful today. The Public Gardens on Boylston Street are heavily polluted by drivers trying to get on a highway. Boston University is surrounded on both sides by speedways, and the students there have a sad park on a strip of grass they call "the Beach" because someone told them to imagine the highway noise is the ocean.

  We have the opportunity to rethink the Charles River for the next 50 years.

  I recommend removing Storrow Drive/Soldiers Field Road, using the ROW for a new riverside transit connection (perhaps a slow-moving metromover like the one in Miami), and restoring the adjacent urban fabric and parkland for a safe and stress-free bike, pedestrian, and wheelchair route. This must become an accessible place where we can experience nature in the city without car noise, speed, pollution and car stress. **It's deeply sad that I can walk to the Esplanade from my home, but I'd have to get a car** to drive to a park or woods where I don't have to hear cars.

- For the Mass Pike: I think we can make some visionary changes to the way urban highways look and feel. Dropping the speed limit to the city speed limit of 25mph as the Pike enters Boston city limits, dropping the number of lanes, and redesigning the "streetscape" the highway to feel like a neighborhood parkway would have transformational positive effects on our human experience in Allston, Cambridge, and along Commonwealth Avenue. The standard concrete landscapes that accompany American highways have the unfortunate effect of making people numb out and drive through as fast as possible. We can change that. Once DB-17

these drivers get to River Street in my neighborhood, they are still in the highway mindset. Well, my neighborhood is not here to be cut through, and we need MassDOT to help tame these drivers by preparing them for slowing down in the city before they're off the highway.

Designing the Pike within city limits with a drastically lowered speed and streetscape enhancements like human-scale lighting installations, greenery, and murals will help drivers engage with their surroundings, and psychologically shift from highway brain into an urban, slower, possibly more caring state of mind. We won't need so many lanes in the very near future, because we are going to reduce VMT and solo trips. No need for an ugly environment that people will want to speed through, we have a great city here. Vision Zero has been adopted by Boston and Cambridge, and the noise pollution from 25mph traffic is significantly reduced compared with the current speeds, sometimes in excess of 80mph.

- Finally, w

e need our agencies to work together to coordinate a shift to shared mobility among our regional commuting population. I don't believe autonomous vehicles can or should solve this problem for us, and we can't wait around to plan for the possibility. In any case, we have a geometry problem. For those of us who live in the city, shared mobility is the reality. For people who don't live here but want to work in the city: MassDOT needs to get them on board with sharing, it is only fair.
I want to see a public-private partnership to promote sharing today, with data-driven route definition and real-time updates to improve experience for commuters.
This might mean using Uber/Bridj-like technology to coordinate electric shared vans in the suburbs and beyond, with these vehicles using a priority carpool lane to drop passengers at transportation hubs in the city for connection to transit, Hubway, and walking. It doesn't make sense for a vehicle to sit in a garage for eight hours and then clog up our streets when they all leave at the same time. A big selling point for commuters is that they won't have to park anymore!

MAPC has some research and preliminary planning for commuters in the Western suburbs. It's clear that people aren't going to give up the car unless the shuttles are available at the times they need them (I can certainly understand that, since the 47 bus only runs once per hour for some reason, I sure know how that feels). I think we're at a point where technologists can collaborate with government to create truly responsive, effective and equitable solutions that scale.
And, of course these vanpool systems will be successful when we implement policies such as congestion pricing, that will make it expensive and prohibitive to drive a personal vehicle into the city, with the priority on reducing daily SOV commutes. Fewer, slower, non-polluting vehicles means we can reclaim the Charles River from the highways, and it means a much more humane environment for everyone.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Dana Busch 279 Harvard St #42 Cambridge, MA 02139

...

dana.busch@gmail.com
585.314.7621
linkedIn

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Stewardship Council

February 9, 2018

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: Alex Strysky, MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

RE: EOEEA #15278 I-90 Allston Interchange Project DEIR

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Stewardship Council of the Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR") is pleased to submit these brief comments in response to the above-captioned Draft Environmental Impact Report. It is the Stewardship Council's responsibility to review for adoption management plans for all DCR's reservations, parks, and forests, "…regardless of whether such reservations, parks or forests lie within the urban parks district or outside the urban parks district."

Inasmuch as the Allston Interchange project will affect DCR's management of its parkway in Allston (Soldiers Field Road) and the recreational path and adjacent land within DCR's Charles River Reservation, we respectfully request DCR's objectives and management requirements be afforded extra weight in determining the ultimate design affecting these portions of the interchange project. We believe the Interchange project should strive to *improve* the present character of Soldier's Field Road by allowing for slower speeds and implementing road features more consistent with a parkway. It also should take advantage of this unique opportunity to create *new* parkland, improve bicycle and pedestrian access and use, and improve the public's access to and use of the Charles River Reservation. The Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Department of Transportation have a long history of collaboration on designing and building recreational trails and pathways throughout the Commonwealth, and we would expect that collaboration to continue on this project.

DCR SC-1

DCR SC-2

Ultimately, the Stewardship Council looks forward to reviewing a management plan for these facilities that is consistent with these aspirations.

DCR SC-3

Sincerely,

Whitney Hatch
Chairman

251 Causeway Street
Suite 600
Boston, MA 02114-2119
617-626-1250
www.mass.gov/dcr

dcr
Massachusetts

February 9, 2018

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: Alex Strysky, MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Re: EOEEA #15278 I-90 Allston Interchange Project DEIR

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR" or "Department") is pleased to submit the following comments in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") submitted by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (the "Proponent") for the I-90 Allston Interchange Project (the "Project") in Boston.

As described in the DEIR, the Project will replace the functionally obsolete, structurally deficient I-90 viaduct and construct a new interchange with a network of ramps and local street connections, using land now available from the former Beacon Park Yard loading area. The Project will also construct a new commuter rail station on the MBTA Worcester/Framingham Line and relocate a portion of the DCR parkway known as Soldiers Field Road away from the Charles River to reclaim parkland for the Charles River Reservation. The Project has been considered through a public process since 2015, including Task Force meetings which DCR attended. The DEIR proposes a Preferred Alternative with three alternatives in the "Throat" section of the corridor, a narrow section between the Charles River and Boston University with limited space for realignment of roadways. The alternatives are referred to as 3K-HV (elevated I-90 viaduct with at-grade railroad), 3K-AMP (at-grade I-90 with a rail viaduct), and 3K-ABC (at-grade I-90 without a viaduct). The DEIR also considers four options for the viaduct for the 3K-HV alternative, with 3K-HV-3 being the Proponent's preferred alternative.

DCR has care, custody, and control over Soldiers Field Road, our parkway in Allston, as well as the Charles River Reservation. The Project will require a DCR Construction and Access Permit. Overall, DCR believes the Project offers a rare opportunity to create new parkland, improve bicycle and pedestrian accommodation, and transform an underutilized section of Boston to enhance the public's enjoyment of the Charles River Reservation.

Open Space and Recreation

Charles River Reservation

Within the Throat section of the Project corridor, DCR notes that, under existing conditions, the bike path is confined within narrow lanes and lacks spatial separation from the travel lane of Soldiers Field Road. Through this Project, there is an opportunity to improve park visitors' experience within this section of

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Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn E. Polito
Lt. Governor

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary, Executive
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Leo Roy, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

the Reservation. DCR appreciates the effort to assess the impacts to parkland as a variable in evaluating the Throat alternatives. While meeting the various needs of the transportation modes in the corridor within the section is difficult, the Department wonders if there could be additional opportunities to expand the separation between the bike path and Soldiers Field Road while still meeting the various design goals of the I-90 corridor and the railroad lines. In preparing the FEIR, DCR requests that the Proponent evaluate additional opportunities to improve park users' experience through widened buffers between Soldiers Field Road and the Dr. Paul Dudley White ("DPDW") Bike Path with the addition of plantings and landscaping. DCR ROY-1

In the Stormwater section of the DEIR, Figure 5.17-1 indicates that an infiltration swale will be placed in the expanded section of the Charles River Reservation, near a proposed promenade with an event stage, shown in Page 5-33 of the DEIR. In the FEIR, DCR requests that the Proponent demonstrate how the infiltration swale will be incorporated into the park design so it remains useable open space. DCR ROY-2

Pedestrian & Bicycle Amenities

The Preferred Alternative includes direct access to the Boston side of a widened Charles River Reservation, through the construction of an overpass that would span Soldiers Field Road along a portion of Cambridge Street South. DCR believes this connection will provide a vital link to the Reservation and the DPDW Bike Path, and will enhance the public's use and enjoyment.

The Preferred Alternative, including all three sub-alternatives for the "Throat" section, would remove an existing vehicular off-ramp from the westbound Soldiers Field Road lane and incorporate the DPDW Bike Path in this section, as it approaches Cambridge Street and the River Street Bridge. DCR believes this design component will enhance the convenience, safety, and user experience for bicyclists and pedestrians for this intersection as it will eliminate conflict with right-turning vehicles that currently exists with the Soldiers Field Road Westbound off-ramp. DCR believes this design feature is beneficial and should be incorporated. DCR ROY-3

Two of the sub-alternatives ("3K-AMP" and "3K-ABC") propose a reconstructed Grand Junction Railroad ("GJR") bridge, which would allow for continuing the DPDW path under the BU Bridge, and make possible the removal of the narrow boardwalk in the Charles River under the BU Bridge. One of the sub-alternatives (the "3K-AMP" alternative) is shown to provide an additional pedestrian and bicycle linkage on a reconstructed GJR bridge over Soldiers Field Road. (While the existing GJR bridge passes through the Charles River Basin Historic District, the bridge appears to be a "Noncontributing resource" as defined by the National Register of Historic Places.) DCR requests that the Proponent consider incorporating these features into the "3K-HV" alternative. DCR ROY-4

Soldiers Field Road Operations

In the 3K-AMP and 3K-ABC alternatives within the "Throat," the design shows 10 foot travel lanes with one foot shoulders for the northbound and southbound lanes of Soldiers Field Road. The travel lanes are placed at different grades, with the Eastbound lane placed a few feet higher than Westbound traffic, that would be separated by a Jersey barrier. The rationale appears to be to provide some buffering of noise from locations north of the corridor, including the Charles River Reservation. While DCR supports efforts to reduce noise impacts from I-90, the Department notes there could be operational challenges including stormwater and snow removal that arise from having the eastbound and westbound lanes at differing grades. In addition, DCR notes that the inclusion of Jersey barriers within the median could be

DCR ROY-5
DCR ROY-6

inconsistent with the desired character of Soldiers Field Road. Earlier iterations of the 3K-AMP and 3K-ABC alternatives, including a February 2017 design, did not show grade-separated travel lanes along Soldiers Field Road. DCR concurs with the DEIR that ten foot travel lanes in Soldiers Field Road, currently shown in the 3K-AMP and 3K-ABC alternatives, are less desirable than the 11-foot travel lanes included in the 3K-HV alternative. In the FEIR, DCR requests the Proponent articulate the benefit from a noise-control perspective of grade-separating the eastbound and westbound lanes of Soldiers Field Road. DCR is also concerned with the potential overhang of an I-90 viaduct, as shown in Figure 3.3.2, which would pose operational difficulties for DCR in managing Soldiers Field Road.

DCR ROY-7

DCR ROY-8

DCR ROY-9

Oil and Hazardous Materials

The DEIR notes that much of the Project Area operated as a railroad yard beginning in the mid-1800s. In the FEIR, DCR requests the Proponent demonstrate how all lands that are proposed to be conveyed to DCR for parkland purposes, including a realigned Soldiers Field Road, will be properly remediated to meet appropriate MassDEP standards under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP), for the proposed use.

DCR ROY-10

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR. If you have questions related to our comments, please contact Nat Tipton, DCR's MEPA Review Coordinator at (617) 626-1341 or nathaniel.tipton@state.ma.us.

Sincerely,

Leo P. Roy
Commissioner

cc: Priscilla Geigis, Karl Haglund, Patrice Kish, Nat Tipton

From:	Dena Brody
To:	Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc:	Cerbone, James (DOT); jay.livingstone@mahouse.gov; joseph.boncore@masenate.gov; marjorie.decker@mahouse.gov; jay.livingstone@mahouse.gov
Subject:	response concerning the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the I-90 Allston Interchange Project in Boston
Date:	Friday, February 09, 2018 2:22:50 PM

February 9, 2018

To: Matthew Beaton
Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Attn: MEPA Office
Alex Strysky, EEA, No. 15278
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900 Boston MA 02114

To: Alexander Strysky
MEPA Environmental Analyst

From: Dena Feldstein
661 Green Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
denabrody@comcast.net

Re: Comments Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the I-90 Allston Interchange Project in Boston (EEA No. 15278) (the Project)

To Secretary Beaton and all the officials listed above:

In general, I support Henrietta Davis' Policy Order POR 2018 #20 from the City of Cambridge and the Cambridge Neighborhood Association's recommendations and objectives.

I also particularly request:

- that you do further study to ensure a wholistically planned project for both sides of the Charles River DF-1
- that you take into account ways to alleviate the driving hardships the project will create during its construction (please remember that many of us still, and will continue to, drive) DF-2
- that you **preserve on/off access to the MA Pike at Exits 18/20 throughout construction** DF-3
- that you preserve an exit ramp from Storrow Drive directly onto the River Street Bridge toward Cambridge DF-4
- that you not settle on a project plan unless it includes a plan to simultaneously develop West Station to support the growth and population on the Boston side DF-5
- that you **propose and settle on a REALISTIC project plan**, both in terms of time and money, since the majority of such large-scale projects run over budget and longer than anticipated

Thank you for your attention.

From: Elena Saporta <esla@earthlink.net>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2018 10:56 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: I-90 - Letter of support for non-vehicular alternatives

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to ask that this project prioritize mass transit and non-vehicular transportation modes. Automobile ownership is on the wane. to The latest trends call for the establishment of a strong regional bicycle network as well as an expanded rail system.

West Station is key to the project's success. It is essential that it be included in even the most preliminary plans. Transit oriented development will serve the 50,000 future residents well by connecting them with surrounding communities and reducing their reliance on the automobile. ELS-1

The age of the internal combustion engine has peaked. We are ready for a clean, less carbon-intensive future. This project has the potential to become an environmentally healthy, walkable, bike able mini-city - the envy of so many car commuters coming into Boston from afar and being stuck in rush hour traffic day after day.

Thank you for all you can do to transform these hundred reclaimed acres into a livable, lovable place to live and work.

Best,

Elena
Elena Saporta, ASLA, RLA, LEED AP

102 Ellery Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

From:	Eric Stratton
To:	Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc:	comments@walkboston.org
Subject:	I-90 Allston, EEA # 15278
Date:	Friday, February 09, 2018 9:50:37 AM

Dear Mr Strysky,

I support the #UnchokeTheThroat movement with regards to the Charles river walking and biking paths along I-90. The redesign of this project provides a unique opportunity to better serve all commuters, not only those using Storrow Drive or I-90.The current redesign proposal does not do enough to improve 1000 feet of sub-standard path in the narrowest "throat" area. A more generous and usable path layout must be developed. EAS-1

Please consider the additional options to make this a beneficial and lasting legacy of the I-90 redesign, benefitting all road and path users, not simply cars for our already congested city.

Thank you,

-Eric A Stratton

From: Erica Quigley <bluedarner@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2018 11:46 AM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc: projects@livablestreets.info
Subject: I-90 Allston Interchange

Mr. Strysky:

I am filing comments with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act office regarding the I-90 Allston Interchange.

Our choices now will have impact for decades to come. I support neighborhoods that allow people to walk, bike, and take transit to their daily destinations. I also support beautiful, functional public spaces that allow people to connect with nature and with each other.

There are economic, environmental, and social arguments to be made for human-scaled, multimodal urban places. On a personal level, my daily commute is from Jamaica Plain to Waltham, and I envision a day when I can bike through the I-90 Allston Interchange area safely, on protected paths that allow views of the sparkling river while buffering adjacent vehicle traffic.

Here are specific points I urge you to consider:

Build West Station now because we need #TransitNotTraffic EQ-1

- Boston and the region are growing at an unprecedented rate. Delaying West Station until 2040 - MassDOT's proposed construction timeline - will increase congestion, depress economic growth, and limit mobility for all. **West Station must be built as soon as possible to improve mobility, mitigate commuter traffic during construction, and ensure transit-oriented development.**
- Construction for this project will disrupt traffic traveling along the MassPike, Soldiers Field Road, and Cambridge Street for at least five years. By not providing transit options, decision-makers are electing for longer commutes, more pollution, and less economic opportunity for employees, residents, and students.
- West Station is just as important for crosstown connections. A north-south bus corridor at West Station is crucial for making long-desired transit connections to job sectors located in Cambridge, BU, and the **Longwood Area**. EQ-2

Don't build the viaduct EQ-3

- Advocates have offered surface options that will be more practical and maintain opportunities for multimodal connections.
- Not building the viaduct will save time and tens of millions of dollars in construction costs, which can be better spent to provide new transit, bike, and walking connections.
- A surface option will also make air rights developments possible at a future date.

Improve parkland and trail amenities in the Throat

- The DEIR does not fully explore alternatives for improving the Dr. Paul Dudley White walking and biking path near the BU Bridge.
- There are opportunities to shift the trail away from Soldiers Field Road, onto the river's edge or along an adjacent boardwalk.
- Support WalkBoston and the Charles River Conservancy's **#UnchokeTheThroat** campaign, and check out their video **here** to learn more. EQ-4

Create a network of safe, multimodal, and human-scaled streets in the proposed neighborhood EQ-5

- Improve neighborhood connectivity for walking, biking, and transit between North and South Allston. Current plans for the proposed street grid are too wide and pose safety challenges for people walking and biking.
- Allow for the creation of the proposed People's Pike pedestrian and bicycle path between Franklin Street and the Charles River by flipping the rail lay-up yard, as Harvard has proposed. EQ-6
- The Franklin Street footbridge is an essential connection over I-90 for the residents of Allston who are walking and biking and should be built in the first phase. EQ-7

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Erica Quigley
6 Alfred St. #3
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
bluedarner@gmail.com
(617) 595-1354

Esplanade ASSOCIATION™

February 9, 2018

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Att: MEPA Office, Alexander Strysky, EEA #15278
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Via e-mail:
Sec. Matthew Beaton (Matthew.Beaton@state.ma.us)
Alex Strysky (Alexander.Strysky@state.ma.us)

Re: I-90 Beacon Yards DEIR
EEA # 15278

Dear Secretary Beaton,

The Esplanade Association is a privately-funded nonprofit organization that works in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) as a steward for the historic Charles River Esplanade park, and is dedicated to enhancing the experiences of the more than 3 million visitors who enjoy the park on an annual basis.

We write today regarding the I-90 Allston Interchange Improvement Project and MEPA's review of this major project's likelihood to influence public parks and pathways adjacent to the proposed development.

We were pleased that MassDOT and its design team, working with a task force of interested stakeholders, prioritized a number of guiding concepts for the replacement of the Allston Interchange including "Enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connectivity among the different parts of Allston touched by the project area and the Charles River." We certainly agree that this should be a key element of the overall project, and should reflect both (1) connectivity to the Esplanade along with (2) improvements to riverfront pathways up-and-down the Charles River Basin.

The Esplanade Association has been deeply engaged in promoting enhanced multi-modal transit options within the park that prioritizes safety and builds connectivity from outside the Esplanade. Our work has included considering how the separation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic might promote safer commuting conditions and wider usage. Our goal is to minimize conflict and ensure that bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure meets the growing demand on the pathway system.

We encourage you to require the further study, at this time and as part of the I-90 DEIR, of alternative means and methods to significantly improve the environmental quality of the river's edge. The I-90 Allston Interchange Improvement Project offers an opportunity to provide additional safe and continuous access from the Interchange project site and along the Charles River (on the Dr. Paul Dudley White Bike Path) immediately west of the Esplanade. Our experience has shown that to do this safely and sustainably, more thought should be given to the space provided for pathway construction and conflicting uses shall be separated to promote safe commuting and recreational uses. This ESA-1

should be part of the I-90 project.

DCR and MassDOT commissioned a Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity Study for the Charles River Basin – completed by Halvorson Design Partnership and Alta Planning + Design in 2014 – that confirmed the Charles River Basin is a critical nexus in the metropolitan transportation network. The path systems that frame the riverbanks and the bridges are used by as many as 10,000 cyclists, pedestrians and runners an hour. As projects recommended in the study are completed by the state and adjacent municipalities to improve access, multi-modal traffic and park visitorship will grow. The I-90 Interchange Project provides a monumental opportunity to further the earlier study's conclusions by seamlessly linking this new neighborhood in Allston to the existing and improving riverfront transit network on the Esplanade.

We recognize the past efforts of the state to meet the growing needs of walkers and cyclists in the Charles River Basin area, and appreciate your consideration in ensuring that pathways included in I-90 Allston Interchange Improvement Project will prioritize connectivity, usability and safety. We encourage you to require the improvement of the existing pathway infrastructure along the Charles River – and connectivity to and from the Esplanade – as part and parcel of the I-90 Allston Interchange Improvement Project. ESA-2

Sincerely,

Michael Nichols
Executive Director
Esplanade Association

cc: Commissioner Leo Roy, DCR

1264 Beacon Street, Unit 2

Brookline, MA 02446

February 9, 2018

Alexander Strysky

MassDOT

Boston, MA

Subject: I-90 project

Dear Mr. Strysky:

I appreciate the willingness of MassDOT to consider public comment on the upcoming I-90 project in Alston.

As a Brookline resident with an interest in better transportation options for those who do not drive, I favor early development of West Station. A bridge at West Station should serve pedestrians, cyclists, and buses. The project provides an important opportunity for an improved bus connection between the Longwood Medical area and Harvard Square. FC-1

I also hope the project will provide better access to the Charles River for cyclists and pedestrians. The improved access should separate cyclists from pedestrians.

Sincerely,

Francis G. Caro

Frederick Salvucci
6 Leicester Street
Brighton, MA 02135

Via First Class Mail, and Email to: alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

February 9, 2018

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office, Alexander Strysky EEA#15278
100 Cambridge St., #900, Boston MA 02114

Re: Comment of Frederick Salvucci to Secretary Beaton
on I-90 Allston Interchange Project DEIR (EEA #15278)

Dear Secretary Beaton,

I am writing to express my comment on the I-90 Allston Interchange Project DEIR. Let me start with the good points, as that it the shorter list.

1. MassDOT has fully embraced the relocation of Soldiers' Field Road onto Harvard land to expand the Esplanade, provide better access into the Cambridge Street South element of the urban grid, removing the westbound River Street off ramp of Soldiers' Field Road to allow the river bank to be dedicated to an improved Paul Dudley White Path and parkland, and reducing traffic conflict and congestion on Cambridge Street and the River Street Bridge. They have analyzed the alternate possibility of leaving a right turn only ramp from Soldiers' Field Road into the River Street Bridge, and thoroughly explained why that does not work for both park and Paul Dudley White Path and traffic purposes. The DEIR does not explore the possibility that a "slip ramp" from the westbound Solders' Field Road underpass to the Frontage Road and Western Avenue might partially mitigate the Cambridge concerns, while decongesting the complicated Cambridge Street/River Street section of road. I suggest that MEPA require MassDOT to analyze this possibility. FS1-1

2. The DEIR does a reasonable job of describing the improvements to the urban grid that have been discussed with both the City of Boston and the Task Force, and shows traffic projections supportive of less massive street dimensions in the urban grid, which at least moves in the direction advocated by the community participants in the task force. However, there is no visibility given to the set of actions proposed by the City "place making" study to provide a Cambridge Street bypass, which can further reduce traffic and excessive width on urban grid streets, facilitate eventual air rights construction over the rail infrastructure, and even the turnpike, plus provide a People's Pike, plus an improved noise buffer and setback along the Southern edge of the rail infrastructure to significantly improve the interface with the Pratt street neighborhood, sometimes called the "flip". The elimination of any train washing or wheel truing or other noisy or disruptive activities from the layup area is significant in improving the compatibility of the potential use, and the "flip" reduces the conflict in rail operations introduced by mid-day layup. This idea has been discussed with the City of Boston, the neighborhood activists, the landowners involved, as well as MassDOT. In fact, a significant FS1-2

element of the flip is a MassDOT idea, which would improve constructability of the entire Allston redevelopment, and reduce conflict between proposed layup activities Worcester branch operations to South Station and proposed Grand Junction shuttle service. Yet the DEIR does not mention much less analyze this possibility. MEPA should require MassDOT to analyze the possibility to mitigate adverse impact on the Allston community, and consider making it part of the preferred alternative.

3. The DEIR does honor the commitment made by Secretary Pollack to include in the DEIR all three options for the throat, including those using replacement of the highway viaduct, and those with the Masspike replacement at grade, though there are some significant omissions in the fair comparison of constructability, functionality, and cost. FS1-3

4. There is some effort made to deal with questions of constructability, a longstanding issue in the task force meetings. There is an identification of a good area for construction lay down area, accessible from the turnpike, but without identification of the conflict with the construction lay down that would be caused by the MassDOT proposal to do an early action of a layup area for commuter rail, at a different elevation than the final elevation, and in the wrong horizontal location. There is some reasonable detail of phasing, and a recognition that the highway viaduct replacement schemes involve at least 24 months of constrained single-track operations on the Worcester branch, early in the construction, simultaneously with reducing the Turnpike to six lanes. However, the multiple variants of the viaduct replacement scheme cause confusion, and it seems that some of the claims of the advantages of the viaduct replacement are not achievable in the case of HV 3 that is recommended. The very modest improvements in drainage details at the edges of the turnpike actually achievable in HV plans need to be balanced against the 2% cross elevation that the extra width requires, and the reverse horizontal curve and steep grade, all of which are avoided in the ABC at grade plan. The claim that the HV3 plan allows the Grand Junction rail link to operate throughout the construction period is not substantiated, as there is no cross section provided at the most critical point where the Grand Junction ramp structure would be widened into the section 4f DCR land to show if it could actually fit between the Turnpike structure and the edge of Soldiers' Field Road, without requiring the relocation of that road. The claim that HV3 avoids the expense of replacing the 90 year old Grand Junction structure over Soldiers' Field Road, but leaves the option open for the future is not demonstrated with any drawings that would indicate how the old structure could be removed and replaced in the future without disrupting operations of both the Soldiers' Field Road and the Grand Junction rail operations, and seems doubtful, and likely to be very costly, in comparison to doing the entire necessary reconstruction as an integrated construction process. Since these construction details seem to be the basis of greater cost estimate for the ABC plan in this area, they undermine the apples to apples comparison of cost that is required. For this reason, it seems prudent to view the difference in construction cost of the highway elements of ABC and HV as being at least a 100 million dollar advantage for the ABC plan. Moreover, since the only HV plan that physically fits to the constrained area is HV 4, there is no plausible benefit of the HV plan to warrant the added cost and construction complexity, in comparison to the ABC Plan. FS1-4

   However, the DEIR does include enough detail that these deficiencies can be identified, and commented upon and MEPA can require MassDOT to provide the missing cross section information, and clarify that the only HV plan that is physically feasible is HV 4 which has the same cross section as the ABC Plan. The DEIR claims that HV 3 provides a wider cross section that is beneficial, ignoring the likely encouragement of higher speed on the off ramp to city street, undermining safety, but since the DEIR fails to demonstrate that HV 3 is physically feasible, these important safety considerations may be theoretical.

5. The DEIR does introduce the possibility of using federal funding, bonding against toll revenues, and seeking public /private funding as mechanisms to deal with financing the restructuring of the FS1-5

multimodal interchange. While there is no detail provided, the discussion of the possibilities is a significant improvement over prior assertions that there was no idea of how to fund these improvements.

Unfortunately, the list of significant problems in the DEIR is much longer, and quite significant.

6. The "no build" option is extremely questionable and not described in any level of detail to allow serious evaluation. It is hard to understand or evaluate the construction techniques proposed. Since the "no build" does not involve the sequential demolition and reconstruction described for all three options in the throat, carefully described to show how six lanes of reasonable traffic flow can be maintained throughout construction, it seems that the "no build" option is likely to not permit maintenance of six lanes of traffic. It also seems that the Grand Junction Railroad would need to cease operations throughout the construction process, to allow the contractors to gain access to the viaduct structure. It seems that the Worcester branch would be constrained to one track for at least the 24 months described for HV 3, and more likely be closed entirely in the throat area, to provide safe construction conditions for both workers and passengers. FS1-6

   The idea of including a commuter rail layup area in a "no build" is preposterous. While the conditions imposed upon Harvard by the state at the time of the purchase of the Turnpike land acknowledged the right of the state to include a lay-up area for commuter rail, this does not mean that it is a prudent idea ten years later after Harvard has spent considerable money to facilitate the relocation of the CSX rail freight yard to Worcester; after the city of Worcester has cooperated in that relocation based at least in part because of the desirability of eliminating the single track constraint in Allston which has made passenger rail operations constrained and unreliable for fifty years; after significant supportive action by MassDOT in acquiring tittle from CSX for the two track right if way, and the Grand Junction right of way, subject to a CSX easement to operate, and after MassDOT acquired from CSX the control of dispatching, which had so disrupted passenger service , and after the governor has promised Metro west and Worcester continuous improvement in the quantity and quality of passenger services in the area.

   Locating a layup area at the wrong elevation to accommodate storage of commuter rail trains that may not even be able to pass through the construction at all would severely damage reliable passenger rail operations, and makes a mockery of the commitment that Harvard, as owner of the fee would be able to develop economically viable and operationally feasible air rights land uses. The description of the "no build" does not even propose to retain the option for the future of implementing any of the improved transportation and land use benefits that the City of Boston, the Task force and Harvard have spent the past several years working on.

   If this description of the "no build" is the best that MassDOT can describe, then it is incumbent upon MassDOT to admit that there is no responsible "no build" plan, and that the public should focus on the rest of the DEIR.

7. The apparent postponement of West Station until 2040 without an interim West station is unacceptable to all participants in the task force, and the general public. It may make sense to acknowledge that the fully developed West Station estimated to cost 95 million dollars is premature and inconsistent with construction staging plans available now. However, an interim station is needed as a very early action in the reconstruction, partly to mitigate the reduction in passenger rail service through the throat to single track, or even zero track passage for considerable periods as identified in the DEIR. The interim station needs to be built with good connectivity for buses to both Commonwealth Avenue and Cambridge Street, to mitigate the decrease in passenger rail service to FS1-7

metro West and Worcester during the interchange reconstruction.

Even more importantly, the improvement in connectivity between North and South Allston has been the first objective identified by the elected officials of Allston, and is a fundamental responsibility that requires at least bus connectivity between Cambridge Street and Commonwealth Avenue and West Station.

The DEIR ignores that the primary reason for including West Station at the earliest possible point in the reconstruction, along with good connectivity to Commonwealth .avenue as well as Cambridge street for bus services is to improve regional accessibility from Metro West and Worcester to the Boston Area generally, and Kendall and Longwood medical area in particular.

Masspike is now operating beyond its reasonable capacity during significant periods of the day, including the morning and evening rush two hours, and extending into other hours as well. Since the Pike is physically constrained to six lanes at Newton Corner and at Copley to South station, there is no prospect of increased roadway capacity to accommodate the growth in trips that is clearly occurring as Kendall and the LMA, and the Downtown and South Boston Innovation District all continue to densify. Consequently, there is every prospect for the turnpike to actually lose capacity because of gridlock, unless significant additional proportions of Metro West and Worcester trips can be attracted to the rail system, by making significant improvements to the passenger rail system. These passenger rail improvements have been occurring, as the constraints to the Worcester branch caused by the single track operations since the 1970s, and the CSX control of dispatching to the detriment of Passenger rail reliability have been resolved by the joint and cooperative actions of Harvard, in persuading CSX to relocate to Worcester, the cooperation of Worcester in accepting this relocation, and the action of MassDOT in acquiring the ownership of the two track right of way on the Worcester branch, and the Grand Junction Railway. MassDOT is planning to improve capacity and comfort by upgrading the stations in Newton with dual high platforms, reducing dwell time, and expanding capacity. The introduction of West Station to provide transfer options to buses, and the Grand Junction West Station to Kendall to North Station shuttle are necessary to accommodate the increased passenger demand, in light of the passenger capacity constraints at South station that will become worse as the South Station air rights development construction is expected to commence in 2018.

The need for West Station to play a significant regional role is essential to a strategy to maintain accessibility from Metro West and Worcester is significant and growing, even if the development of the Harvard lands in Allston is twenty years in the future.
Finally, the eventual development of the Allston node at high density is essential to the future growth in the Boston economy, as the expansion at Kendall, Downtown, South Boston Innovation district and Longwood reach their physical limits. The DEIR does not identify or measure the need for West Station to begin to play this regional role at the earliest possible time, a very significant omission in the analysis. MEPA should require MassDOT to address this deficiency.

8. The lack of a balanced view of layup needs of the Worcester branch of commuter rail operations is a severe deficiency in the DEIR.

FS1-8

There is a problem with current operations at South Station, which will almost certainly become worse once construction begins apron the anticipated air rights over the track at South Station.

There is no information in the DEIR about the level of disruption that will be caused by the air rights project that was initially approved in the 1980s when there were far fewer passengers using the Station than today.

However, there is a significant limit to the utility of layup space in Allston, if it were available. If there are two tracks available in the Worcester branch, this outbound movement to reach a layup yard would lead to a significant conflict at the West Station area, if the layup is placed on the northern side of the track layout, as every layup move would need to cross the inbound movement. So accommodating the layup would reduce the capacity to serve passengers attempting to access South .station and Back Bay from the Worcester branch. If the "flip" is adopted, so that the layup at Allston would occur on the southern side of the track layout, the operation would be less conflictual, at least for .accommodating Worcester branch trains. However, if there is only one track available through the throat, as will be the case for 24 months according to the DEIR Discussion of the HV3 option, accommodating outbound trains proceeding to layup will conflict directly with inbound trains carrying passengers. This may be feasible for Worcester branch service levels, although there is no analysis to support that possibility. It seems much less likely that layup from the southwest "Providence" line services could also be accommodated through this single-track constraint.

It would seem that there are two preferable ways to handle this question. First, instead of complicating flows with repositioning movements for layup, increase the mid-day frequency of service to Worcester and metro West, and provide more frequent service to customers rather than spending money to park idle trains. Since the turnpike congestion will be worsened during the mid-day as well as the peak hour throughout the construction period in Allston, the additional mid-day service will be useful. Providing hourly service from Worcester, improving the current infrequent schedule, would be a welcome improvement

Secondly, postpone any consideration of adding layup in Allston till the last phase of the reconstruction, when two track rail service will be restored to the throat, and locate the layup on the "flip" location, to minimize conflict with the eventual West Station to Grand Junction to Kendall and North station shuttle.

Locating layup in Allston prior to the reconstruction would attract more train movements into and through a construction zone that would be extremely counterproductive.

Moreover, the location identified by the DEIR for the early action layup is at an elevation approximately five feet higher than the proposed final elevation, requiring the early action layup to be relocated elsewhere in order to regrade the site!

Finally, the early action layup is located on the only site identified for contractor lay down area, which is essential to achieving reasonable cost effective construction of the interchange.

None of this complexity is described or analyzed in the DEIR notwithstanding the requirements of the ENF and South Station FELS that Allston layup would be subject to MEPA review in the Allston DEIR. In the absence of such analysis, it is appropriate to conclude that MassDOT has no rationale for how this can possibly work, and the idea of early action layup should be definitively rejected; any layup contemplated should be added at the end of the construction period, and be located in the "flip" location.

9. The constructability analysis of the HV3 option in the throat area is extremely deficient. Notwithstanding frequent requests for clear cross section analysis of how the Grand Junction can be constructed with a reasonable alignment, eliminating the current double reverse curve and how it can possibly fit between the proposed widening of the Highway viaduct and Soldiers' Field Road, there is no such cross sectional, information provided. There is in the section 4 f analysis an indication of a need to relocate the Grand Junction into DCR land in this vicinity , but there is no clear explanation FS1-9

of how this all can fit, either during the proposed construction, nor after. The description in the DEIR asserts that the Grand Junction operations can continue in place throughout the reconstruction, with no documentation of how this can actually fit in the constrained space available, with the vertical supports of the Viaduct constraining the alignment. Moreover, the HV3 option proposes to defer the replacement of the 90 year old and structurally deficient Grand Junction Bridge over the Soldiers' Field Road to the future, but provides no explanation of how this is possible, and what the additional disruption of Soldiers' Field Road, and Grand Junction operations would be in that future construction, nor of the cost consequences of requiring an added phase of reconstruction later would be. At the very least, there is a severe failure to disclose information which MassDOT must have available, since they do identify the section 4f conflict. It seems likely that there is simply not a reasonably cost effective way to implement the HV3 option, so the reality is that the HV 4 option would be built, which provides the same cross section as the ABC Plan, but costs at least $100 million more.

10. The previous rationale for an HV option in the throat was the belief that it was necessary to maintain rail service to Houghton Chemical Company, but Houghton has agreed to relinquish rail freight access within a year, so the Houghton access issue is no longer relevant. FS1-10

    Finally, the HV plan proposes to retain Grand Junction rail service throughout the construction period. However, the Grand Junction service runs diagonally across the throats from north to south, separating the most difficult viaduct removal and replacement construction activity from the contractor layover area proposed at the former site of Beacon Park Yard! This failure to anticipate the need for efficient construction conditions is a fundamental flaw in the DEIR. MEPA should require that MassDOT must provide a credible constructability analysis for the HV option (which appear to be impossible) or drop the HV plan as unfeasible, and focus on the ABC Plan that costs at least $100 million less.

11. The AMP Plan for the throat proposes to relocate the Paul Dudley White Path at the beginning of construction, to improve constructability by permitting temporary relocation of Solders' Field Road. The Charles River Conservancy, Walk Boston, and Sasaki have proposed relocating the Paul Dudley White Path onto a boardwalk in the River. This provides an opportunity for improving constructability and an improved Paul Dudley White Path and river edge park, a significant "win-win" outcome. FS1-11

    MEPA should require MassDot to develop a detailed constructability plan for the ABC Plan incorporated the boardwalk for both constructability and environmental periods.

12. In light of the severe deficiencies in the DEIR, many of the advocates are proposing to call for a draft supplemental EIR/S. This is understandable, but could be counterproductive and simply cause more delay, and who knows what complexity with integrating the state and federal processes, repeating one of the factors that led to the delay and cost increases on the Green Line extension. It is useful to consider if there is another path that can correct the deficiencies, make reasonable decisions, and propel this process forward. This can be done by definitively dropping the HV viaduct option, and focusing on the ABC Plan as the preferred alternative.

    It is also essential to begin to identify how a public private partnership would be structured. Lots of the haggling about who should pay for what might melt away if there were an approach of developing the right outcome for MassDOT, MBTA, Harvard, the City, and the various advocates, and proceeding with a partnership that recognizes the desirability of recognizing the contribution of land by BU and Harvard so that the public private partnership can get full credit for these contributions, at least in terms of having them Recognized as legitimate local match for federal funds. It could be that

in developing a way to proceed with the public private discussion, some less lengthy mechanism to clean up the deficient DEIR can be identified. Alternatively, MEPA should require preparation of an expedited supplemental DEIR to clean up all these inadequacies.

Thank you for considering this comment.

Sincerely,

Frederick Salvucci

Frederick Salvucci
6 Leicester Street
Brighton, MA 02135

Via First Class Mail, and Email to: alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

February 9, 2018

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office, Alexander Strysky EEA#15278
100 Cambridge St., #900, Boston MA 02114

Re: Supplementary Observation to Comment Submitted by Steve Kaiser on the DEIR in regarding to the I-90 Reconstruction in Allston (EEA #15278)

Dear Secretary Beaton,

I am sending this supplementary observation to the submittal of comment by Steve Kaiser on the DEIR in regard to the 1-90 reconstruction in Allston (EEA #15278) to cross reference Steve Kaiser's work, and propose that MEPA should require MassDOT to review the Kaiser submittal, and verify the basic conclusion; that the true capacity constraints of the Turnpike in Allston are the six lane bottlenecks at Newton Corner and at Copley, and that there is no point in providing for more capacity in the throat.

Indeed, using ASSHTO type dimensions in Allston is likely to result in excessive speed, which would be especially counterproductive as traffic approaches the off and on ramps in Allston, both eastbound and westbound, where motorists should be slowing down to focus on decision making, not being encouraged to speed up at these critical decision making points. This is especially true for traffic exiting the Turnpike to join city streets, which should be encouraged to slow down to be compatible with a livable street philosophy for local streets in the area, to be compatible with a 20 mile per hour safer local traffic speed, recognizing the important sharing of the roadways with pedestrians, buses, and bicycles.

The theoretical support that Steve provide for his proposals is impressive, all the more so because he back its up with the pragmatic observation that MassDOT has constrained flow nearby to six lanes in prior Turnpike reconstruction efforts with no ill effect.

To go beyond the observations about peak hour conditions, I believe that it is also appropriate to recognize that during the off peak periods, when motorists are tempted by the lack of congestion to drive at speeds beyond the current 45 MPH Turnpike speed limit, the perverse incentive to high speed caused by excessive lane widths and breakdown lanes will lead to even more unsafe conditions, as motorists encounter the complexity of off ramp moves, and join local streets.

Steve's observation that the capacity of the Turnpike is actually getting lower because of the peak hour turbulence caused, especially at the Newton Corner bottleneck, is powerful, and leads to the conclusion, in my view, that the urgency of providing more transit capacity to provide realistic alternatives for western commuters is not a future imperative driven by new development in Allston that may be ten or more years in the future, but is an actual crisis already upon us if we recognize the traffic generation that must be expected of new development in Kendall actually under construction or already permitted by the City of Cambridge! The need for West Station is not primarily for a neighborhood station to serve a future neighborhood, but for a regional destination station to provide western rail commuters with options to transfer to a rail shuttle from West Station to Kendall to North Station; to new bus shuttles to connect from West Station to Commonwealth Avenue to Longwood Medical area, and Harvard Square; and quite likely other bus connections as well to interface with the bus services from Watertown and Waltham, as well as commuter rail options from Waltham Center to Allston and beyond. Failure to deliver added transit capacity in the immediate future, and in services capable of attracting mode shift by current motorists will lead to inexorable worsening of traffic conditions on the Turnpike regardless of new demand related to future development in Allston, which must be considered as additive to the already compelling need for improved transit options.

The conclusions that I draw from this consideration of Steve's observations are:

1. to agree with his observation that introduction of ASSHTO "standards" is not only pointless, but actually counterproductive; FS2-1

2. to agree with his observation that the Turnpike between Newton Corner and Copley should be recognized as a six lane expressway; FS2-2
3. to support the ABC proposal for an at grade replacement for the current structurally and functionally deficient viaduct as appropriate because it is both more constructible, less expensive to construct and to maintain, and more conducive to moderate speeds appropriate for this location; and FS2-3
4. to support the proposition that at least an interim West Station is required at the earliest possible point in the construction to renew the Allston Interchange, along with roadway connections for bus services via Malvern to Commonwealth Avenue and Cambridge Street. FS2-4

The only point where I may disagree with Steve's conclusions, or at least argue for further analysis is on the question of providing only a six-lane replacement in the throat, in order to prioritize retaining some green space between the Turnpike and Soldiers' Field Road. An alternative use of the extra lanes could be to view them as auxiliary lanes to support use of the Turnpike between Newton Corner and possible new ramps to St Mary's street and Beacon Street in Boston, to encourage traffic to Longwood Medical Area to use the auxiliary Turnpike capacity to avoid excessive use of parallel local streets in Allston and Cambridge. I believe that it would be useful to require analysis of this alternative use of the two otherwise unnecessary lanes on the Turnpike.

In any case, I certainly feel that Steve has done a real service in putting on the record the data available to MassDOT to recognize that there really is no case to be made for an eight-lane replacement viaduct with wider standards in Allston as proposed by MassDOT.

To add my own observations of Turnpike AM peak eastbound flow as a frequent rider of the 501 and/or 503 bus routes, these express bus routes join the eastbound Turnpike, along with significant auto and truck traffic, using the eastbound on ramp east of the three lane constraint on Turnpike width under Newton Corner. But notwithstanding the four-lane cross section available from the on ramp to the Copley off ramp, the traffic often moves at 5 to 10 miles per hour, until it passes the Allston tolls, when it picks up speed in the section to the 1-93 interchange. It appears that the cause of the backup is the complexity and heavy use of the Allston left hand off

and on ramps. Since all option the DEIR for the Allston interchange provide for more normal right hand off and on ramps, the rebuilt interchange may reduce turbulence, and support more reasonable 30 to 40 mph flow.

However, it is important to recognize that the street configuration at the off ramp forces all traffic destined to the Longwood Medical Area, Allston, Cambridge/Harvard Square, and Cambridge Central and Central Square to use this single off ramp to Cambridge Street, a very heavy volume of traffic to disburse. The traffic predictions included in the DEIR pursuant to the ENF requirement to explore the possibility of ramp connections to Commonwealth Avenue, to permit the traffic destined to the Longwood Medical Area to avoid the over use of Cambridge Street showed a dramatic reduction in traffic on Cambridge Street, Harvard Street, Linden Street, and Brighton Avenue – exactly the outcome that the Allston proponents hoped for.

Nevertheless, representatives of BU and Brookline fear the possibility of being inundated with the rerouted traffic in the Babcock Street area, and the task force agreed to limit the roadway access to Commonwealth Avenue via Malvern Street to buses, bicycles and pedestrians, which BU agreed to. Inexplicably, the DEIR omitted the agreed upon bus connectivity from its preferred alternative. It is essential to restore this agreed upon bus connectivity between Cambridge Street, West Station, and Commonwealth Avenue via Malvern to improve public transportation and distribution in the area. FS2-5

But it also makes sense to at least consider the possibility of providing more direct access from the eastbound Turnpike to the Longwood Medical Area via Park Drive, by providing an off ramp from the eastbound Turnpike to St. Mary's Street, or Beacon Street, recognizing that the four lane Turnpike cross section may not be necessary in the area east of the BU Bridge, and that providing an additional off ramp could provide the traffic relief on Allston streets reported in the DEIR without the entering traffic increases in the Babcock Street Area of BU and Brookline.

This additional eastbound off ramp might be expected to relieve the over use of the eastbound Allston off ramp which causes the backups on the Turnpike today, and also provide some relief of traffic that today uses River Street, Memorial Drive, and BU Bridge, and/or Solders' Field FS2-6

Road, University Road, Commonwealth Avenue and St. Paul Street, locations where heavy auto traffic conflicts with very heavy pedestrians and bicycle flows. The DEIR refuses to consider such ramps, claiming that this would be "beyond the scope of the project", but the traffic from the eastbound Turnpike destined for the Longwood Medical Area and other Boston/Brookline/Fenway destinations is clearly part of a significant problem at the Allston ramps, and should be analyzed using the CTPS traffic model, so I am specifically requesting that MEPA require MassDOT to carry out this analysis, so that there can be a transparent analysis of potential significant benefit, as well as nay possible negative side effects. FS2-6 con't

But to return to the larger issue identified in the Kaiser comment, there is no more to reverse the worsening gridlock on the Turnpike, and spill over traffic onto neighborhood streets in Allston, Brighton, and Cambridge unless significant numbers of westend commuter attracted by job expansion already underway in Kendall Square can be attracted to use rail to West Station, with attractive distribution options such as the West Station to Kendall to North Station rail shuffle in the MassDot Five Year Plan, plus frequent shuttle bus service from West Station to Harvard Square and Longwood Medical Area.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely

Frederick Salvucci

February 9, 2018

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
Alex Strysky, EEA # 15278
100 Cambridge St, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114
Sent by email via: alexander.strysky@state.ma.us

Re: I-90 Interchange Project

To Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs Matthew Beaton:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the I-90 Interchange project, with a comment deadline of today, February 9 (https://blog.mass.gov/transportation/massdot-highway/i-90-allston-interchange-improvement-project-public-comment-period-extended/).

We request that MassDOT make walk, bike, and rail transit opportunities in Allston the centerpiece of the new and existing neighborhoods, and that walk, bike, and rail transit be given equal or higher design priority than vehicle traffic infrastructure. Fully designing the Grand Junction railroad corridor for a connected walk-and-bike path as well as passenger rail capacity is fundamental to this major reconstruction of Allston. Of course, maximizing walking, cycling, and transit ridership will help the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and attain its mode shift goals.

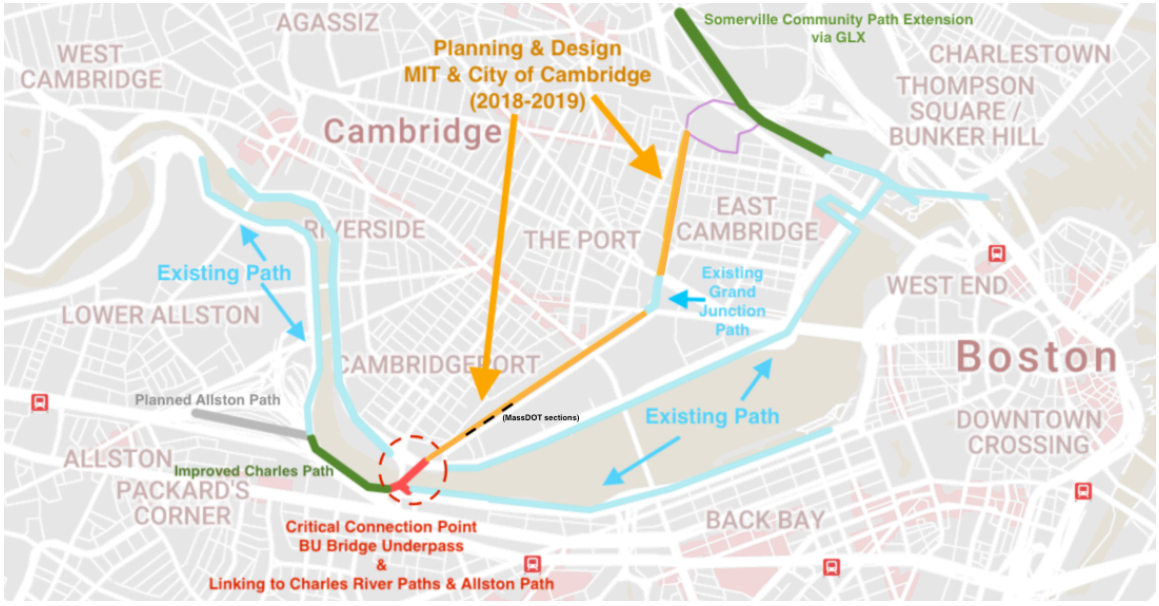
The Friends of the Grand Junction Path has made significant progress over the past few years in building partnerships that have resulted in built path sections, and significant money and institutional and municipal resources dedicated to planning, design, and construction throughout Cambridge.

However, there are issues of significant concern for the future viability of path and transit connections in the Grand Junction corridor. One of the most crucial sections of the corridor to make the Grand Junction Path functional is where it crosses the Charles River under the BU Bridge and links to the Charles River Paths in Boston, and will link with the future planned Allston multi-use path as part of the Interchange plan.

FGJ-1

We have great concern that these path connections will be precluded if not fully designed as part of the Allston I-90 Interchange project. A walk/bike path connection between Allston and the Charles River must be fully designed such that a link with the future Grand Junction Path crossing under the BU Bridge is accommodated.

Grand Junction Path context



We ask that MassDOT includes a walk-bike path corridor in the designs, from the south side of the I-90/Soldiers Field roadway to the north side, at the BU Bridge area, including connection points from the Allston Paths to the Charles River Paths and the BU Bridge underpass to the Grand Junction Path.

FGJ-2

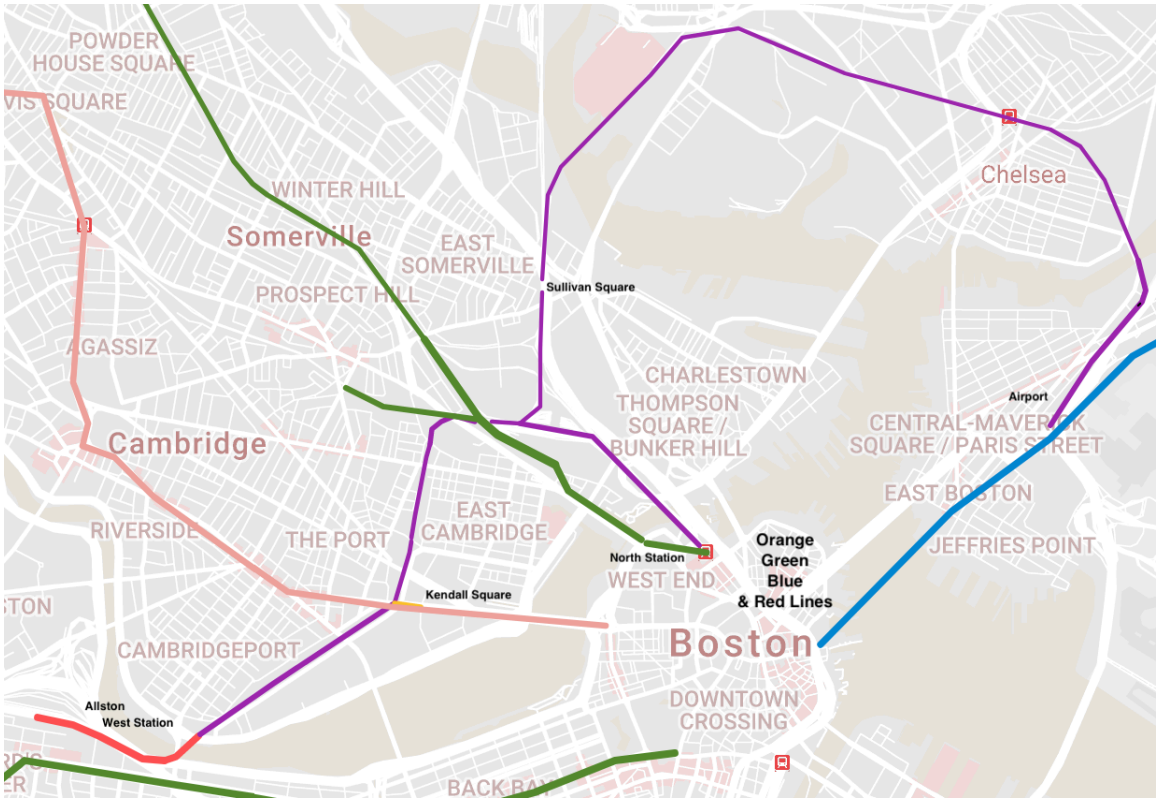
We also request that MassDOT "unchoke the throat" along the path on Storrow drive, as described in the editorial written on behalf of the Charles River Conservancy and WalkBoston (https://commonwealthmagazine.org/opinion/unchoke-the-throat/).

FGJ-3

Urban Rail possibilities in the Grand Junction corridor must be specifically accommodated in the Allston Interchange plans.

A future of transit links from West Station to Kendall Square, North Station, Sullivan Square, Everett/Chelsea, and the Airport must not be precluded. The Allston Interchange plans must include the design & build of West Station, with capacity for both Commuter Rail and Grand Junction Urban Rail. FGJ-4

Grand Junction Urban Rail and Transit context



We ask that MassDOT includes and specifies sufficient width for passenger rail trackage on the Grand Junction corridor from the future West Station area to the "throat" area. FGJ-5

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to realize a successful I-90 project and its most salient features.

Sincerely,

John Sanzone
Friends of the Grand Junction Path

Lynn Weissman & Alan Moore
Friends of the Community Path

cc:
stephanie.pollack@state.ma, Jon.Lenicheck@mail.house.gov, Patricia.Jehlen@state.ma.us, denise.provost@MaHouse.gov, mike.connolly@mahouse.gov, Jordan.Neerhof@mahouse.gov, William.Sutton@mahouse.gov, Christine.Barber@mahouse.gov, Claire.Teylouni@mahouse.gov, Sal.DiDomenico@masenate.gov, Paul.Donato@mahouse.gov, Sean.Garballey@mahouse.gov, matthew.hartman@masenate.gov, citycouncil@cambridgema.gov, manager@cambridgema.gov, wlandman@walkboston.org, grandjunctionpath@gmail.com, mark.e.chase@gmail.com, dcarr@cube3studio.com, EBourassa@mapc.org, tobrien@hyminvestments.com, denison@gmail.com, kara@livablestreets.info, steve@livablestreets.info, jackie@livablestreets.info, snutter@gmail.com, bikeinfo@massbike.org, richard@massbike.org, info@somervillebikes.org, barbara.rubel@tufts.edu, bostongreenroutes@somervillebikes.org, jason@bostoncyclistsunion.org, bwolfson@bostoncyclistsunion.org, craig@greenwaysolutions.org, info@eastcambridgeplanningteam.org. bkearney@walkboston.org, bsloane@walkboston.org, reisnere51@gmail.com, wigzamore@gmail.com, alan@pathfriends.org, friendspath@yahoo.com

Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Attn: MEPA Office
Alex Strysky, EEA # 15278
100 Cambridge St, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Thank you for the review that you and your staff are doing for this large and complex project. It will change how more than 200,000 people travel every day, the quality of life and health of tens of thousands of people who live nearby, and the Charles River parkland alongside the highway. It will make a strong statement about the priorities of our Commonwealth.

The MEPA regulations are clear:

> State agencies must use all feasible measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate damage to the environment or, to the extent damage to the environment cannot be avoided, to minimize and mitigate damage to the environment to the maximum extent practicable.

In its proposal for the I-90 Allston Interchange Project, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has not come to meeting that standard. I therefore ask that you require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR that will comply with MEPA.

My specific concerns regarding the impact on bicycle usage this project will bring are below.

A bit of background on my own engagement in the neighborhood: beyond the four years of I-90 Allston Task Force discussion with the project team, I have been a resident in the Allston area for over fifteen years, and six years ago I founded a non-profit community organization focused on educating community members on bicycle maintenance and safe riding in Boston and the surrounding neighborhoods. I have worked on the advisory boards of Boston Bikes and the MassDOT, and have been employed by MassBike, Hubway Bicycle Share, Boston Pedicab/Rickshaw, and both the City of Boston and City of Cambridge as lead instructor for their public school classes. Therefore, I feel confident of my understanding of the dangers and barriers to bicycle riding for commuting, health, and recreation in and around Allston presented by this project.

My concerns regarding safe and attractive bicycle use in the 3K Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) proposal are as follows:

- The DEIR does not accommodate an off-street and uninterrupted multiuse bicycle and pedestrian path east/west through the project area, though such a path, coined as "the Peoples' Pike," has been an expressed community need since the very first public meeting. This community need was reiterated by a site visit and bicycle ride I personally hosted for the benefit of project manager Michael O'Dowd and members of the Howard Stein Hudson consulting team in August of 2014. During that bike ride in 2014, members of the project team and project management discussed ways to separate bicycle movements from the automobile traffic, especially at the intersections, by means of overpasses and underpasses. GM-1

However, at no point in the design process was any complete and uninterrupted bicycle path analyzed and presented to the Task Force.

- The DEIR requires all bicycle riders heading north/south through the Malvern St, Babcock St, and Agganis Way connections to utilize signalized intersections that cross highway ramp traffic. These intersections, at the ramps and at Cambridge St South, are the point where highway traffic becomes local road traffic, and invariably will force conflicts between bicyclists and highway traffic. Since it's common understanding that in order to encourage bicycle use, riders must feel safe and separated from automobile traffic, and our bicycle network is only as strong as its weakest link, the DEIR is proposing a very weak link. GM-2

- The DEIR prevents bicycle access between Commonwealth Avenue and the Paul Dudley White (PDW) Bike Path on the Charles River Reservation. The PDW pathway is a crucial connector to the East Coast Greenway network, as well as the link for riders commuting and recreating between Boston, Allston, Watertown, Newton and points beyond. However, the 3K-HV highway viaduct option for the "throat" section of the highway is proposing to rebuild the viaduct, thereby separating Commonwealth Ave and the PDW. MassDOT has graciously analyzed two other options for the "throat," including one that puts the highway at-grade, however in its analysis of the 3K-ABC at-grade option the DEIR omits any bicycle or pedestrian connections between Commonwealth Ave and the PDW. GM-3

If we charge ourselves with the protection of our natural environment and the mitigation of damage of automobile traffic, and if we are to comply with the Commonwealth's Global Warming Solutions Act, we need to encourage safe bicycle access through this project for all riders ages 8 to 80 (and beyond).

Therefore, I ask that MEPA require MassDOT to submit a Supplemental DEIR that will comply with MEPA regarding these crucial issues with bicycle connectivity and safety: designing a complete and uninterrupted bicycle pathway east/west through the project area; separating bicycle crossings *through (by means of signalization) or separated from* the intersections adjacent to the highway on/off ramps; connecting bicycles between Commonwealth Avenue and the Paul Dudley White Bike Path as made possible through the 3K-ABC at-grade "throat" option.

Thank you for your careful consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Galen Mook

Galen Mook
Allston resident
I-90 Allston Interchange Project Task Force Member

From:	Gene Dolgin
To:	Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc:	Cerbone, James (DOT); joseph.boncore@masenate.gov; jay.livingstone@mahouse.gov
Subject:	Regarding the I-90 DEIR
Date:	Friday, February 09, 2018 3:17:19 PM

Dear Secretary Beaton:

I am writing in support of the January 24, 2018 submittal made by Henrietta Davis, community representative to the I-90 Task Force, in response to the DEIR for I-90. I broadly support the following 12 key Requests for Action or Further Study that she notes, and in particular, believe the first four are absolute musts.

I understand you and the broader group have a difficult job and must manage many stakeholders, but highly encourage you to focus on developing solutions for a multi-modal, modern, urban-oriented city, and not focus solely on fixing/expanding car-based travel through / around the area.

- Transit and Multi-Modal Planning – implement now, not in 2040. GD-1
- Parkland and Paul Dudley White Path – design the riverfront to enhance this world-class environmental resource, increasingly used for both commuting and recreation.
- Underpass under River Street Bridge for Pedestrians, Joggers, and Cyclists – support as part of future River Street Bridge reconstruction project GD-2
- West Station – implement as part of first phase of I-90. GD-3
- Right-Turn-Only Exit to River Street from Soldiers Field Road – retain a narrow one-lane exit ramp, designed with improved pedestrian/bicycle path. GD-4
- Cambridge Access to/from the Turnpike – study expected travel times and develop acceptable traffic management plans. GD-5
- Grand Junction Rail Bridge over Soldiers Field Road – reconstruct as part of I-90 Project. GD-6
- Noise – develop effective noise barriers and other features to reduce existing harmful noise impacts from Turnpike on Cambridgeport, Riverside and Magazine Beach Park. GD-7
- "Throat," – develop new, comprehensive alternative that reduces current noise levels, is visually attractive from Cambridge, and has positive impact on Paul Dudley White Path. GD-8
- Width of Turnpike – reconstruct to be as narrow as possible; do not build wider travel lanes and wide shoulders that do not exist in any other parts of the Turnpike between Route 128 and the Prudential Tunnel. GD-9
- Construction Mitigation and Project Compensation – develop detailed action plan to mitigate impacts from years of aggravation and disruption, reduce construction noise, and effectively manage expected heavier traffic on Memorial Drive, Western Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, the many bridges over the Charles River, and Cambridgeport and Riverside neighborhood streets. GD-10
- Pathways on Cambridge side of Charles River – improve to accommodate increased use while Paul Dudley White Path is closed during construction. GD-11

Sincerely,

Gene Dolgin
515 Putnam Ave. Apt 3
Cambridge, MA 02139

From: Georgene Herschbach <gbherschbach@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2018 1:47 PM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Subject: Allston Interchange Project: A Better Boston

To: Alexander Strysky, on behalf of the DCR.

Dear Mr. Strysky,

The Allston Interchange Project offers an extraordinary opportunity to improve the Charles River Basin, and make Boston a more attractive, livable, responsible city. Rather than limiting the Allston Interchange Project to improving roads for cars, how wise and futuristic it would be to include in the scope of the project expanding and improving paths for walking and cycling, and adding landscaping along the Charles River in the area of the "Throat".

The plan I prefer is that proposed by the designer Sasaki & Solomon Foundation, which would add a landscaped strip between the road and the river in the "Throat" area of Sorrow Drive. Thus, instead of just roads with loud, fast-moving traffic abutting a narrow path shared by cyclists, walkers and runners, the "throat" would include a bike path, a walking path, benches for sitting along the river, and beautiful landscaping with trees, shrubs, flowers, and more. This would not only enhance recreational walking and biking along the Charles, but probably lure some to bike to work instead of driving. That, in turn, would reduce the amount of CO2 that Storrow Drive automobile traffic pumps into our atmosphere. Also, the added trees and shrubs would help absorb some of the CO2 emitted by cars driving along Storrow Drive. GH-1

For all Boston residents, all those who enjoy recreational walks or bike rides along the Charles, as well as those visiting or merely passing through the city, enhancing the "throat" area of Storrow Drive with attractive walking and bike paths, as well as landscaping along the bank of the Charles River would be a visible and valuable improvement to the city and the Charles River Basin. Such an expansion of the Allston Interchange Project would also align well with the mission of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, "To protect, promote and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural and recreational resources for the well-being of all." This seems a win-win to me.

With thanks and best wishes,
Georgene Herschbach,
An avid cyclist and walker, less eager driver

975 Memorial Drive, #712
Cambridge, MA 02138

From: Gesa Kirsch <gesa.kirsch@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2018 11:37 AM
To: Strysky, Alexander (EEA)
Cc: projects@livablestreets.info; advocacy@thecharles.org
Subject: Comment on I-90 Interchange Improvement Project

Dear Alexander Strysky:

As a resident of Boston, and an active runner and cyclist, I am writing to urge you to improve the walking/biking path along the I-90 Interchange as you plan for the future of infrastructure for Boston and the state of MA. As you well know, our highways and streets are choking with cars. We need alternative, inviting, welcoming ways to get around the city and the state. By including an improved, wider path along the Charles River, and prioritizing the construction of the West Station now, you will support a vibrant, growing city of Boston, increase access to alternative forms of transportation, contribute to environmentally friendly ways of commuting, and attract a young, smart workforce that demands new ways of commuting, working, and living in the city.

If you haven't had a chance to do so, please take a moment to review the two-minute video produced by The Charles River Conservancy, Sasaki Associates, and Walk Boston that showcases what the new, improved section of the Charles River bike and walking path might look like. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S06XDNsetKc

I urge you to improve the Charles river pathway and prioritize the construction of West Station now. Thank you for your consideration. GK-1 GK-2

Many thanks, Gesa Kirsch

_____
Gesa Kirsch
6 Whittier Place, # 5H
Boston, MA 02114

Mr. Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
Alex Strysky, EEA No. 15278
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Beaton:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the proposed reconstruction of I-90 in Allston. I am a long-time resident of Allston-Brighton and have attended several community meetings concerning this project.

Early on, there were encouraging discussions about using this project as an opportunity to offer alternative options for transportation that would reduce the demand for cars and increase green space. Because this project will help define our region for decades to come, I hope that you will support the following recommendations made by various community groups that have given this project careful study:

- **Build West Station** now, rather than delaying its construction. GT-1
- **Add green space** near the river, buffering people from the highway, improving the habitat for wildlife, and helping to naturally clean storm water before it reaches the river. GT-2
- Implement an all **at-grade design**, making a modest extension of the shoreline. GT-3
- Create **separated walking and biking paths** in an expanded parkland. GT-4
- Build **new footbridges** over the highway and rail lines to connect Boston University, Commonwealth Avenue, and Brookline to the Charles River path. GT-5

With wide-spread concern about global warming and its potential negative effects on Boston, it is very important to encourage people to travel by means other than by individual cars. If a significant investment were made now in West Station, additional bus routes, and new walking/biking paths, these improvements would make an important contribution in reducing traffic and greenhouse gases.

Thank you for considering these concerns along with more specific recommendations made by organizations such as the People's Pike, Livable Streets, Walk Boston, and the Charles River Conservancy.

Sincerely,
Gloria Tatarian
33 Brainerd Road, #208
Allston, MA 02134

Secretary Matthew Beaton
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Attn: MEPA Office
Alexander Strysky, EEA #15278
100 Cambridge St., #900, Boston MA 02114

Re: Allston I-90 Interchange DEIR

Secretary Beaton—

We are writing to express significant concerns regarding the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement project. We are writing to voice our support for phase 1 commuter rail station construction, north-south bus service connections, better neighborhood surface street design and a viaduct-portion reconstruction option that maximizes pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure opportunities. We, the undersigned, are graduate students at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design pursing post-graduate degrees in urban planning. We are concerned with modern, research-backed and community-responsive urban planning strategies. We do not speak for Harvard University; instead, we speak for best practices in urban planning compiled through our professional and educational backgrounds.

The I-90 Interchange project is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the Commonwealth to implement serious emissions mitigation solutions and improve livability for surrounding communities. We find the Commonwealth's current proposals a potential wasted opportunity that is most focused on highway building instead of real transit and active transportation alternatives. The current proposal front-loads environmentally-damaging components while delaying elements that mitigate environmental damage. We believe the DEIR is inconsistent with the environmental justice, mode shift, climate change and healthy transportation policies adopted by the Commonwealth. The transportation sector is the leading contributor of greenhouse gases in Massachusetts, and decreasing the need for private automobile travel is our best opportunity to meet environmental goals. We believe the project, as currently proposed, fails to meet the needs of present-day citizens across the Commonwealth and unfairly burdens the Allston community and adjacent neighborhoods with serious, negative health impacts.

We are most deeply concerned about the following issues that are critical to both environmental impact mitigation as well as community impact:

We believe the construction of West Station in Phase 1 is critical. 2040 is unacceptable. We believe the Beacon Yards area will never develop as a modern, environmentally-responsible neighborhood without robust transit access. Further, delaying West Station by two decades means two decades of auto-oriented development. It is our belief that, based on precedent, by that point, it will be far too late to ever shape Beacon Yards as anything other than a car-dependent neighborhood. We are pleased with Harvard University administrators' increased financial promise towards West Station construction and their request to move construction forward along an advanced timeline. We hope the Commonwealth accepts this opportunity. HGSD-1

We believe the Commonwealth needs to reexamine street design and active transportation infrastructure proposed to ensure Beacon Yards becomes a transit, pedestrian and bicycle-oriented HGSD-2

environment. The Commonwealth's current plans put an emphasis on extensive car capacity including streets as wide as six lanes. We believe (and research affirms our belief) if streets are built with enormous capacity to carry automobile traffic you will get a neighborhood with enormous automobile traffic. This is not a modern, environmentally-concerned future for the Commonwealth.

North-South bus link: **We believe bus service must be improved in the area as a means for near-term mitigation and long-term connectivity.** We believe a serious multi-modal future includes direct and reliable bus access to serve commuters between the Longwood Medical Area, Boston University and Harvard University as well as a connection through North-to-South Allston. Further, we believe this service and access is critical as a phase-1 priority to mitigate construction and environmental impacts. HGSD-3

We urge a viaduct reconstruction option that provides the best opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. In addition to reducing a physical barrier to the Charles River, selecting an at-grade option allows for future pedestrian and bicycle access and is the best opportunity to mitigate highway impacts to surrounding neighborhoods. Reconstruction of this stretch of the highway as a viaduct severely limits any future active transportation infrastructure potential. HGSD-4

Thank you for your consideration of this letter. If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Bennett at (414)861-5498 or markbennett@gsd.harvard.edu.

Sincerely,

Mark Bennett
Matt Genova
Eleni Macrakis
McKayla Dunfey
Shanasia Sylman
Casey Peterson
Solomon Green-Eames
Carolyn Angius
Megan Slavish
Jeremy Pi
Alex Rogala
Syed Ali
Juan Reynoso
Kathryn Gourley
Finn Vigeland
Jeanette Pantoja
Jennifer Kaplan
Angela Gile
Rian Rooney
Laura Lopez Cardenas
Ciara Steon
Ben Sadkowski
Malika Leiper
Lena Ferguson