

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS  
GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT**

**STATION WORKSHOP – SUMMARY MINUTES**

**LOCATION OF MEETING:** Cummings Elementary School, Somerville

**DATE/TIME OF MEETING:** February 19, 2008 from 6:30 to 8:30 PM

**ATTENDANCE (signed in):** 74

**PROJECT TEAM:** Katherine Fichter, EOTPW; Michael McArdle, VHB; Kristine Wickham, VHB; Regan Checchio, RVA; Charlie Patton, RVA

**PURPOSE/SUBJECT:** This project general meeting provided an opportunity for those less familiar with the project to be updated about the Green Line Extension Project and allow public feedback on potential stations at Brickbottom, Washington St., Gilman Sq.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Green Line Extension Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation & Public Works (EOTPW), in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). This project will extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest Boston corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford, with an extension of the main line to Medford and a spur line to Union Square in Somerville. The goals of the project are to increase mobility, encourage public transit usage, improve regional air quality, ensure a more equitable distribution of transit services, and support opportunities for sustainable development.

**HANDOUTS:** Winter 2008 Project Fact Sheet

**INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

Katherine Fichter, EOTPW, introduced herself and thanked everyone for coming to the Union Square Station Workshop. She explained that these meetings were meant to provide an opportunity for the public to share their comments, concerns, and questions so that the project team can plan the best possible stations for their communities.

Mike McArdle, VHB, reviewed the meeting agenda. He said the meeting would begin with an overview of the project followed by breakout session where participants could go to either table detailing the proposed station location for either Brickbottom and Washington St. or Gilman Square. Afterwards, there would be a brief recap of general comments received during the breakout session.

Mike McArdle, VHB, gave a brief overview of the project. He said the project purpose is to extend the Green Line from Lechmere Station to Somerville and Medford in order to improve regional air quality, improve corridor mobility and regional access, boost transit ridership, ensure equitable distribution of transit services, and support opportunities for smart growth initiatives and sustainable development.

Mr. McArdle then gave a brief overview of the planning history of the project from the 1960s to the present. In September 2007, EOTPW began this phase of the planning which requires the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Throughout this long history of planning, there has been much public outreach. In this phase, outreach efforts include an Advisory Group, with representatives from Cambridge, Somerville and Medford; neighborhood Station Workshop meetings; local official briefings, interagency meetings, and a project website – [www.greenlineextension.org](http://www.greenlineextension.org).

Mr. McArdle then reviewed the four Alternative Alignments being studied as part of the DEIR:

- Alternative 1: Green Line Extension to Medford Hillside with spur to Union Square
- Alternative 2: Green Line Extension to Route 16/Mystic Valley Parkway with spur to Union Square
- Alternative 3: Green Line Extension to Medford Hillside with spur to Union Square via McGrath Highway/Somerville Ave.
- Alternative 4: Green Line Extension to Route 16/Mystic Valley Parkway with spur to Union Square via McGrath Highway/Somerville Ave.

Mr. McArdle then discussed the criteria being evaluated in the DEIR including operations, noise and vibration, air quality, land takings, traffic & parking, the support facility, construction impacts, and community impacts, including environmental justice. With respect to traffic impacts, 38 intersections will be analyzed to form an existing baseline along with the proposed ridership impacts. Mr. McArdle also noted that the most construction impacts will likely be in modifications to existing bridges. He said temporary and long-term impacts will be evaluated.

The project may also be eligible for funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts program. Because EOTPW has decided to apply for federal funds, a federal environmental review will also be required (the NEPA process) in the form an Environmental Assessment (EA). EOTPW plans to prepare and file the document as a joint EIR/EA. Key criteria determining eligibility for New Starts funding are cost-effectiveness and whether or not the transit supports land use. Mr. McArdle noted that the New Starts application process is highly competitive, and the application will be filed in September.

Mr. McArdle explained that siting the proposed stations is an important part of the environmental process. The project team is developing criteria to evaluate potential locations on Washington Street, Gilman Square, Lowell Street, Ball Square, College Avenue, Winthrop Street, Mystic Valley Parkway/Route 16, and Union Square. Many of these locations had been identified through previous planning studies including the 2005 Alternatives Analysis (the Beyond Lechmere study). In addition to these sites, the Certificate issued by the Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) in 2006 states that EOTPW should evaluate the feasibility and advisability of locating stations at Route 16; Winthrop Street, between Winthrop Streets and College Avenue, and the Brickbottom/Twin Cities area. Consideration for station siting includes station access, transit operations, land use opportunities, impact on residents, ADA considerations, costs and environmental impacts.

Mr. McArdle explained that the breakout session would have three tables. Each table had a specific Union Square alignment and station location. One table laid out plans for a route that would go along the Fitchburg line with a station near Prospect St. Another showed an alignment that had a line going along Somerville Ave and then looping around to go back along the Fitchburg line. A third table showed an alignment with trains reaching Union via Somerville Avenue. Participants were invited to go from table to table offering their input. Some recommended areas for discussion include access, transit connections, neighborhood features and station amenities.

## **WORKSHOP COMMENTS**

### **Somerville Avenue-Fitchburg Line Loop**

#### Station Access and Traffic

- Station should be accessible for pedestrians
- Extend sidewalks along Prospect St. Bridge.

#### Neighborhood Features

- Station should provide good access to businesses.
- What will be the neighborhood impacts of a support facility in the area?
- What kind of construction impacts will there be along Somerville Avenue?
- This option cuts through Prospect Street
- Consider development and land use along Prospect when designing alignment/station.
- Put station closer to Union Square

#### Alignment suggestions

- Consider a single track for the Union Square spur.
- In favor of current direction of loop
- Consider reversing direction of loop. Have trains come to Union Square via Fitchburg and come back via Somerville Avenue
- Consider a cut and cover tunnel line along Somerville Avenue
- Consider running extension along McGrath Highway.
- Consider single line that comes up through Fitchburg line, then cuts back up to Lowell line via Washington Street

#### Intermodal Connections

- Station should have good bus connections
- Consider designing bike lanes along Somerville Avenue
- Station should have a full bicycle facility.
- There should be a Commuter Rail stop in Somerville
- Would pushing the spur to Porter Square for a Green/Red Line connection be possible?

## Other

- Consider additional station stops along Union Square spur.
- How many lines will be coming through Lechmere and run along the Union Square spur?
- What kind of noise impacts can abutters expect?
- Pedestrian crossing at Prospect/Somerville Avenue/ Washington Street (underpass?)
- Remove viaduct and go along McGrath Highway from Lechmere

## **Fitchburg Corridor**

### Station Access

- There are many unsafe intersections in area that pedestrians would have to cross to reach station.
- Stations should be safe and easily accessible.
- Pedestrians should have good access to and from Webster Avenue.
- Station should have good wheelchair access.
- Station should be more accessible to nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Consider separate in-bound/out-bound boarding platforms to take up less space.
- Pedestrian safety on Prospect and Somerville Avenue is a concern.

### Neighborhood Features

- Station should help maximize development opportunities in area.
- Push Union Square stop to the Ames Envelope Factory.
- There may be soil contamination by Kylie Barrel.
- Land around Prospect Iron and Steel, Anesta property is a blighted area. Consider taking property.
- Where the platform is sited will have tremendous impact on development. Station needs to be closer to Union Square.
- Consider including a multiuse path along spur.

### Alignment Suggestions

- Consider a Tunnel under Webster Avenue
- Consider a cut-and-cover tunnel on Prospect.
- Fitchburg Line alignment places station too far from Union Square shops and will generate the least ridership.
- Consider placing stop on Prospect Street

- Fitchburg Line alignment will have the least impact but will also yield the lowest ridership.
- Consider a single track along the Fitchburg Line.
- There is no road network to support access for the Fitchburg Line alignment.
- Line should be underground along Fitchburg Line to Union Square.

#### Intermodal Connections

- Try to connect to Porter Square. Green Line to Red Line connections are very important.
- Coordinate project with the Urban Ring project
- Have bus transfer between Washington Street stop to Union Square stop.
- Consider bus lanes on Prospect Street.
- Commuter Rail should stop in Somerville.

#### Other

- Maintenance Facility noise is a concern.
- Bring frequent service to Union Square.
- Station is too close to Washington Street Station to generate ridership.

### **Somerville Avenue In-Street Running**

#### Station Access

- Provide good pedestrian access
- Design bike lanes in area.
- Provide excellent wheelchair access
- This alignment provides better accessibility for pedestrians in comparison to the Fitchburg Line.

#### Neighborhood Features

- Emergency access along Somerville Avenue (fire and police)
- Incorporate City plans for Washington Street into design.

#### Alignment Suggestions

- Consider using cut-and-cover tunnels
- Consider turning area near Independent restaurant into parking area. Consider placing station there off Somerville Avenue.
- Consider tunnel under Webster Ave.
- Consider rerouting alignment along Newton Street and Everett Street.

#### Intermodal Connections

- Station should have bike accommodations

- Provide linkage to other lines for greater access and mobility

### Other

- Consider closing platform/station area off to traffic.
- Reroute traffic around station.
- Consider underground station at Union Square.
- What will the travel times be for this alignment?
- Consider single track operations along Somerville Avenue, back and forth.

### **RECAP**

Mr. McArdle thanked everyone for participating in the workshop. He noted that participants wanted the station to be sited as close to Union Square as possible. He assured participants that the project team was meeting with city officials regularly and integrating their design with city planning.

One participant was concerned that the stations would not be accessible for handicapped. Mr. McArdle assured him that all stations would be ADA compliant. The stations will be designed so that they are easily accessible for everyone.

One participant asked what the major criteria for the maintenance facility site were. Mr. McArdle responded that size is a major factor. The site will require 11 acres. The facility must be configured for ease of operations. The site must also have minimal environmental impacts.

One participant suggested looking at the photos of the historical rail stations in the area and possibly incorporating some of the history of these stations into the design of the new Green Line Extension stations.

## ATTENDANCE

Rick Azzalina  
Dick Bauer  
Thomas Bent  
Chris Braiotta  
Amando Caro  
Priscilla Chew  
Jennifer Civitella  
Caitriona Corke  
Stuart Dash  
James Fiege  
Jonathan Fishman  
Ellen Frith  
Thomas Gilbert  
Elias Interiano  
David Jordan  
Larry Kaplan  
Jeff Kressner  
Kenneth Krause  
Karen Larsen  
Jon Lenicheck  
Mark Lyons  
Jim McGinnis  
Lynn McWhood  
Matthew Miller  
Alan Moore  
Steven Mulder  
Kristen Odle  
Evelyn Persoff  
Rose Pisari  
John Roderick  
Joe San Clemente  
Naomi Slagowski  
Meira Soloff  
Sean Sullivan  
Thomas Taylor  
Jesse Widtfeldt  
Andrea Yakovakis

Dennis Baker  
Roberta Bauer  
Fred Berman  
Lisa Brukilacchio  
Amy Cerrito  
Vickie Choitz  
John Connolly  
Paul Cote  
Greg Dicoivitsky  
Ethan Field  
Bob Fitzpatrick  
Jim Gallagher  
Alan Greene  
Patricia Jehlen  
Todd Kaplan  
Rob Kassel  
Justin Klekota  
Enid Kumin  
Danny LeBlanc  
Meredith Levy  
Robert Martel  
Anne McKinnon  
Don Meglio  
Karen Molloy  
Stephen Moudlette  
Ron Newman  
Robert Panish  
Jessica Piana  
John Recinoto  
Jeff Rosenblum  
Jocelyn Siegel  
Wurtney Snyder  
Barbara Steiner  
Grover Taylor  
David Turin  
Mindy Wildfeldt  
Wig Zamore

Meeting Date	Location	Neighborhood Features	Desired Station Amenities	Station Access	Transit Connections	Anything Else We Should Know
2/19/08	Union Square		Bike Racks, sheltered waiting area		Bike Lanes	Station needs to be close to center of Union Square while minimizing delays by auto traffic.
2/19/08	Union Square	Dense Housing, much of which is relatively affordable	Well-lit and safe, Benches, canopy for weather, good wheelchair access	Convenient for pedestrian and bike access	Commuter rail connection to Fitchburg Line, Good bus access	Overall concern about the equity and affordability impact of the new transit stop, all efforts should be made to help ensure that low income and working class folks are not priced out and displaced.
2/19/08	Union Square	Business/Residential: Mixed use and affordable housing. Focus on development while preserving Somerville's identity.	Canopies		In favor of loop model because of flexibility of where the station platform could be.	Bring detailed demographic data to next meeting to gain better understanding about development potential.
2/19/08	Union Square	Look at options that bring extension to heart of the square near Stone Ave.		Pedestrian access very important, minimize street crossings	Plan traffic/street realignments as part of design. Buses should connect to station.	Opposed to Fitchburg alignment. Consider single-line proposal.
2/19/08	Union Square	Put station in Union Square not 1/2 mile away. In favor of Somerville Ave route.				In favor of single-line proposal.
2/19/08	Union Square	Two senior housing developments, many people with mobility impairments	Make sure station meets everyone's needs	Should be as close to Union Square as possible.		Consider building along McGrath Highway, turn McGrath into Boulevard, could solve problems regarding the Fitchburg tracks under McGrath.
2/19/08	Union Square	Public Property, safety complex, opportunities for redevelopment of Boynton Yards, Prospect Iron and Steel etc.			Leave ability for future connections to Red Line.	
2/19/08	Union Square	SCAT studio, Residential and retail, target, boys and Girls Club, Brickbottom Artists Building, Prospect Hill Park and Tower, and Union Sq. Farmer's Market	Charlie Card vending machines, maps of surrounding areas, Clear directions to connecting buses, Bicycle Racks	Washington St, Somerville Ave, Prospect St, Webster Ave, Bow, Summer St, Newton St, Concord St.	Bus connections, 80, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91, CT2	Consider removing McGrath overpass viaduct to improve surrounding real estate and simplify running Green Line down center of McGrath highway and Somerville Ave.
2/19/08	Union Square	Retail, Residents without cars, art shows, farmers market, etc.	Bike Racks, Weather Shelter, Passenger Drop off/pick up, Bus pick up at platform	Community bike path, ability to reach center of union square safely, easily and quickly	Consider putting rail underground beneath Somerville Ave for all of route or the part in the proper square. Money invested now will pay off later.	Union Square has very heavy traffic, pay close attention to pedestrian safety, ADA accessibility, and bike access.





**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT**  
UNION SQUARE STATION CONCEPT  
STATION PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
DRAFT - FEBRUARY 19, 2008

MBTA BUS  
Route 85  
Route 87

MBTA BUS  
Route 85  
Route 86  
Route 87  
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Route 85

SOMERVILLE AVENUE

ALLEN STREET

LINDEN STREET

MERRIAM STREET

MEDFORD STREET

WEBSTER AVENUE

NEWTON STREET

PROSPECT STREET

CHARLESTOWN STREET

CLARK STREET

WINDSOR PLACE

A1 NEW & USED  
PLUMBING  
AND HEATING

SCHERTZER  
TRAILERS

ANESTIS  
METALS

PROSPECT IRON  
& STEEL CORP.

EMPIRE MARBLE  
AND GRANITE

BEACON SALES  
COMPANY

PROPOSED GREEN LINE OUTBOUND TRACK

PROPOSED GREEN LINE INBOUND TRACK

PLATFORM

TARGET  
A.J. WRIGHT  
ADVANCE AUTO PARTS

WALNUT  
STREET  
CENTER

FITCHBURG MAINLINE TRACK 1

FITCHBURG MAINLINE TRACK 2

CONTRACT ADDITIONAL BAY ON WILLIAM J. JOY  
MEMORIAL THROUGH GIRDER BRIDGE

HUB GLASS  
SERVICES

PAT'S AUTO BODY  
& TOW SERVICE

F.W. RUSSELL  
DISPOSAL INC.

61 MEDFORD STREET



- GREEN LINE TRACKS
- COMMUTER RAIL/FREIGHT TRACKS
- 10' CLEARANCE ENVELOPE
- RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE



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PROPOSED GREEN LINE OUTBOUND TRACK ☐

PROPOSED GREEN LINE INBOUND TRACK ☐

FITCHBURG MAINLINE TRACK 1 ☐

FITCHBURG MAINLINE TRACK 2 ☐

- ☐ GREEN LINE TRACKS
- ☐ COMMUTER RAIL/FREIGHT TRACKS
- ☐ 10' CLEARANCE ENVELOPE
- ☐ RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE



SAINT JOSEPH'S CHURCH  
 SABIS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

A1 NEW & USED PLUMBING AND HEATING  
 SCHERTZER TRAILERS  
 ANESTIS METALS  
 PROSPECT IRON & STEEL CORP.  
 EMPIRE MARBLE AND GRANITE

CONSTRUCT NEW BAY ON WILLIAM J. JOYCE MEMORIAL THROUGH GIRDER BRIDGE

TARGET  
 A.J. WRIGHT  
 ADVANCE AUTO PARTS

WALNUT STREET CENTER

HUB GLASS SERVICES

PAT'S AUTO BODY & TOW SERVICE

F.W. RUSSELL DISPOSAL INC.

61 MEDFORD STREET

WEBSTER AVENUE

NEWTON STREET

PROSPECT STREET

ALLEN STREET

CHARLESTOWN STREET

LINDEN STREET

MERRIAM STREET

MEDFORD STREET

CLARK STREET

WINDSOR PLACE



**GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT**  
 UNION SQUARE STATION CONCEPT  
 STATION PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
 DRAFT - FEBRUARY 19, 2008

MBTA BUS  
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SAINT JOSEPH'S CHURCH

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A1 NEW & USED PLUMBING AND HEATING

SCHERTZER TRAILERS

ANESTIS METALS

PROSPECT IRON & STEEL CORP.

EMPIRE MARBLE AND GRANITE

BEACON SALES COMPANY

ALLEN STREET

LINDEN STREET

MERRIAM STREET

CHARLESTOWN STREET

WALNUT STREET CENTER

WINDSOR PLACE

SOMERVILLE AVENUE

PLATFORM

PROPOSED GREEN LINE OUTBOUND TRACK ☐

PROPOSED GREEN LINE INBOUND TRACK ☐

CONSTRUCT NEW BAY ON WILLIAM J. JOYCE MEMORIAL THROUGH GIRDER BRIDGE

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F.W. RUSSELL DISPOSAL INC.

61 MEDFORD STREET

FITCHBURG MAINLINE TRACK 1 ☐

FITCHBURG MAINLINE TRACK 2 ☐

100 0 100 200  
SCALE IN FEET

GREEN LINE TRACKS  
 COMMUTER RAIL/FREIGHT TRACKS  
 10' CLEARANCE ENVELOPE  
 RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE