

# MEMORANDUM

## BEACON STREET PROJECT COMMUNITY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2013

Hayes Morrison, Director of Transportation Planning gave a brief overview of the meeting format and turned it over to Mr. David Giangrande for a technical review.

Mr. Giangrande:

- Emphasized that state, federal and local funding will be utilize to construct this project. As a result the project has been reviewed and vetted at all three levels of government.
- Restated Agenda
  - Overview
  - Changes between 25%-75%
  - 30-45 minute question and answers
  - Staff to remain for individual questions.
- Describe Project limits
  - Just NW of Oxford Street to Dickinson Street at the Cambridge city line.
- Complete Streetscape Improvements
  - Reconstruct all sidewalks
  - New sidewalk at Harvard Academy of Arts & Science
  - Complete new roadway for rideability and enhance the function of the roadway, sidewalk and bicycle modes.
- Completely new fully actuated and coordinated traffic signals at Washington Street and Park Street intersections. New pedestrian signals at Buckingham Street and Sacramento Street.
- Fully ADA Compliance
- Amenities
  - New benches
  - New trash receptacles
  - New bike racks
  - New concrete paver accent strips
  - 200+ new trees and tree grates
  - Concrete paver crosswalks
  - Fluted mast arms and signal posts
- Bicycle accommodation via cycle tracks from Oxford Street to Museum Street and Park Street to Washington Street with 5 ft. bike lanes everywhere else. All bicycle facilities will be marked in green and bicycle boxes will be at all major intersections.
- Each section of the project was reviewed via cross section and artist rendering.
- Utility update was given
  - Work is under way on water & sewer and is anticipated to be completed by year end. Gas Company has some minor work to complete.

- Changes from 25%-75% were highlighted by Mr. Giangrande
  - Minor baseline revisions, particularly at Washington Street.
  - Mountable curb changed from 1:4 to 1:6, material still being researched
  - Sidewalk at Harvard Academy for the Arts & Science increased from 5 ft. to 5.5 ft.
  - Application for and approval of experimental bike boxes. Bike boxes added to project.
  - Approval and addition of non-skid green pavement. Still working out details, but it will likely be an epoxy base product.
  - Crosswalk at Sacramento Street was moved back to current location
  - Crosswalk at Museum Street to remain
  - New crosswalks at Oxford Street and Prentiss Street
  - Buses relocated at Park Street and Washington Street. Eliminated midblock bus stop between Park Street and Washington Street.
- Mr. Giangrande provided information on a RFQ that the City has prepared to provide additional parking to the residents.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

- a) How many parking spaces will be removed between Oxford Street and Museum Street?

Mr. Giangrande did not have the specific number for the area in question.

Alderman Heuston emphasized that much of the parking problem on Beacon Street is a result of transient parkers.

- People park and leave their cars all day and night, and take the Redline elsewhere. She stated her commitment to work to improve the parking regulations to limit this condition.

- b) Can the speed limit be lowered to 20 mph?

Mr. Giangrande emphasized that the speed limit is based on the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of users, which is 28-30 mph on Beacon Street. The State therefore, would typically not allow a speed limit change.

Alderman Heuston, emphasized that the BOA has applied for home rule and will continue to push the State on this subject. She strongly supports the City being able to set the speed limit.

- c) A transit user of bus 83 wanted clarification on the bus stops and the interaction of the bus stops with the cycle track. He also asked if anything could be done on the pavement in the interim because he got “rattled to the bone”.

Mr. Giangrande stated that there are no bus stops next to the cycle track mainly because the buses turn down Park Street and most of the cycle track is northwest of Park Street.

Mr. Giangrande said that as part of the utilities project, the contractor is responsible for a temporary patch. We will try to get the contractor to make the patches as smooth as possible to try to help.

- d) Rat Issue – Several residents were concerned with rats during construction.

Mr. Giangrande explained that the utility and roadway contractors have a provision for rodent control. A gentleman said that someone put a trap on his property. Mr. Koty, DPW Commissioner said that the DPW receives testing logs from the independent exterminator hired by the contractor every 2 weeks. He also stated that traps are not placed on private property unless requested by owner.

- e) Individuals commented that they are pleased to live in Somerville and excited about the project, however, would like to see raised bike crossing at side streets to ensure the vehicle turning movements are delineated and hence slow.
- f) Astrid Dodd – Still had concerns over the separation of pedestrians and bicyclists. She is very concern about the white light regulation. Bicycles should have a white light to help the pedestrian identify the bicycle and the speed at which it is coming.

Mr. Giangrande emphasized the furniture zone with vertical elements, the gray sidewalk, red furniture zone and green cycle track would provide physical separation to reduce conflict. Additional sidewalk Icons and signage combined with education will round out a comprehensive plan.

- g) David Watson – Had concerns about the connection to Somerville Avenue in the Northwest section.

Mr. Giangrand emphasized that the connection is beyond the limits of work, however the City through their Bike Committee is aware of the issue and has agreed to try to make changes at that location as a separate City project.

- h) Mr. Sheckman commented and submitted written comments on the potential of changing some one way pairings of side streets and adding left turn lanes on Beacon Street.

Mr. Giangrande took the comments and ensured Mr. Sheckman that DCI would review and respond to his comments.