



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Secretary Bernard Cohen
The Executive Office of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170
Boston, MA 02116

December 9, 2008

Re: Ongoing Analysis of Green Line Maintenance Facility & Future Planning for City of Somerville

Dear Secretary Cohen,

Thank you for your recent visit to Somerville. I appreciate the time you took to speak with us about the transportation opportunities and challenges faced by the City. With your assistance, we have enjoyed a long and fruitful collaboration with EOT and the Massachusetts transportation agencies. We look forward to continuing and enhancing our relationship in the years to come.

I wanted to follow up with regard to two items we discussed in detail at our meeting. These include the City's technical review of the impacts of the proposed Green Line Maintenance Facility and the need for City-State collaboration on additional planning efforts in the Inner Belt/Brickbottom and citywide.

Technical Review of the Proposed Green Line Maintenance Facility

From the beginning of our discussions regarding a potential facility, I have taken the position that, should your office make a compelling case, Somerville would be willing to consider locating such a facility within our borders, provided that it would be designed and operated to meet criteria in three key categories:

1. **Economic development** - It would not impede or deter future economic development in the Inner Belt and Brickbottom districts; including on the site of the facility itself.
2. **Access** - It would not augment the existing access barriers between Inner Belt and Brickbottom (and instead, it could possibly reduce barriers); and;
3. **Quality of life** - Any facility should not adversely impact the quality of life of residents in the area.



You will recall that I have repeatedly conveyed to EOT the City's priorities regarding the Inner Belt and Brickbottom areas and the crucial role that the Green Line Extension and its associated infrastructure will play in the future economic vitality of the area. I have also indicated that, as a matter of environmental justice, the City of Somerville should absorb those functions and facilities related only to the extension project. The Inner Belt has been historically burdened by poorly-designed transportation projects. Somerville should not be further burdened by infrastructure that does not serve its residents and business community.

As mentioned to you last week, although we acknowledge the thought and creativity used by your team to develop the most recent alternatives our initial review indicates that EOT's preferred alternative, as presented, would not meet the three criteria detailed above. We have forwarded these concerns to your design team and are willing to offer any assistance needed to determine possible improvements or changes. Indeed, it is critical to identify an alternative, or redesign, that will satisfy a thorough environmental review process so that the extension project can remain on its 2014 timeline.

While I acknowledge that the entire Green Line Extension project must meet transportation and engineering objectives, I know you will agree that it is not in the Commonwealth's best interest to diminish the economic opportunity that would arise were the Inner Belt and Brickbottom districts developed to their full potential. That potential development, in turn, would actively support the Green Line Extension by providing thousands of additional daily riders.

Additional Planning Efforts

The City of Somerville recognizes the need to be flexible, cooperative and creative in working with the Commonwealth to address the transportation challenges faced in such a dense and diverse urban environment. I strongly believe that through coordinated and collaborative planning, we can collectively optimize the opportunity presented by the Green Line Extension and mitigate any potential negative impacts. To accomplish this in a timely and efficient manner, I directed my staff to develop specific projects and funding strategies designed to expand our planning efforts around the Green Line Extension. As I briefly described these initiatives to you, they involve:

1. *Inner Belt / Brickbottom Master Plan* – This effort will result in a land use plan, a proposed transportation network, urban design concept, and market analysis that will paint a comprehensive picture of the area's significant development potential. The master plan will also include a preliminary estimate of infrastructure costs and recommendations on how to structure needed financing. This work will take 9 to 12 months by consultants already well-versed in the project and will cost an estimated \$350,000. That said, we anticipate receiving actionable preliminary results within 60-90 days.
2. *Citywide Transportation Modeling and Action Plan* – The proposed analysis will identify solutions to improve mobility by all modes of transportation today, coupled with the identification of future improvements needed to accommodate planned development throughout



the city (taking into account the impacts of the Green Line Extension and the Orange Line Station planned at Assembly Square). An important deliverable will be a computer model allowing analysis of various development scenarios and their impacts upon the transportation network, citywide. This three-year program is estimated to cost \$634,000.

3. *100% Design for the Community Path to North Point* – To date, the EOT has been clear that its responsibility is to prepare the conceptual design of the Community Path. However, we all recognize the Community Path extension along the proposed Green Line alignment has to be designed and built in lock step with the Green Line Extension. This is a complex endeavor that is inherently tied to the light rail project. Therefore, significant cost savings will be achieved by having the same consultants design both projects. The estimated design cost for this effort is \$816,000.

As mentioned during our meeting, we have identified two earmarks available to the City of Somerville that we are willing to use for funding the above-mentioned \$1.8 million programs. To match the City's commitment of \$1,440,000, we are seeking 20% state matching funds, or \$360,000 from the Commonwealth. To that end we have also initiated discussions with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) in order to identify potential sources.

It is my sincere hope that we can continue to work together to resolve the challenges facing us in a mutually supportive manner. It is incumbent upon us to eliminate obstacles certain to generate community concern in order to ensure that the Green Line Extension remains on its 2014 timeline. To achieve that goal, we will need a high level of coordination and cooperation than can be best achieved by combining our efforts. We remain willing and committed to provide financial, technical, and other support to your efforts, in a way that will achieve expedited completion of the Green Line Extension.

Please let me know if you or your team needs additional details on our initiatives or if you have any general questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Curtatone
Mayor

Cc: Congressman Michael Capuano, U.S. House of Representatives
Governor Deval Patrick, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Senator Anthony Galluccio, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Senator Patricia Jehlen, Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Representative Denise Provost, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Representative Carl Sciortino, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Representative Timothy Toomey, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Secretary Daniel O'Connell, EOHEd, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Honorable Board of Aldermen, City of Somerville
Carrie Russell, Conservation Law Foundation

