

STEP January monthly meeting

January 25, 2010

Visiting Nurses Association

In attendance: Ellin Reisner, Jim McGinnis, Kristi Chase, Naomi Slagowski, Steve Mulder, Rachel Fichtenbaum, Virginia Duffy.

Introductions

Updates and Announcements

- Community Corridor Planning
 - We will apply for funding (\$25,000) from the EPA to be trained to lead charrettes. It is set up for working with a company called E2 (E squared) to be trained. This money could be available very quickly, which is what we need because the station designs will be needed relatively soon. This is what we have asked for in a training:
 - Ask if they have technically skilled people for help with mapping and land use planning.
 - Take information from city Trends meetings to consider in designs.
 - STEP would take the lead on organizing local talent to lead charrettes, and Groundworks and SCC would take the lead on the outreach.
 - Each charrette would be specific to each station, not for the entire line at once.
 - It would also be great for EPA's Smart Growth people to help out with this effort.
 - Some money is left in the air quality portion of this grant, and it has been agreed that it can be used to finish the videos of the ISEE scientist interviews and get them posted on our web site.
- CAFEH study
 - They are still looking for people to participate, and some of the blood work is coming back from people that have already participated.
 - The air quality instrument van has been going around and taking measurements.
- Assembly Square T station head house
 - There was some discussion about how successfully the community worked together on the second head house at Assembly Square T station.
- Community Path
 - There is some funding available to start the first piece of the path extension (to Central Street). It is possible this will happen soon.
 - The Max Pak building is mostly down.
- Green Line comment letters
 - There were a lot of great letters written.
 - It was great to see the city request that McGrath overpass over Washington Street and Somerville Avenue come down.

Reports and Discussion

- Option L Alternative/Maintenance Facility
 - Alan Moore did a sketch of an alternative to Option L, and Steve Kaiser developed it, since he has engineering background. We decided it is a good idea to give him a token of appreciation for all of his work.

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- Alan Moore has a nice web site to see his Google maps. Ellin will send the link to his site.
- A more detailed review of Option L will be needed, so we would like to see them evaluate this alternative Option L along with Option L. We should write a letter to the Secretary to suggest review.
- We should also suggest to the MBTA and MassDOT that the plan for public process should be started soon.
- It would be nice to meet with some people with design expertise or interest on the alternative to Option L.

- Secretary's certificate/Green Line
 - We need to identify gaps in the certificate – more details on things that aren't clear in the FEIR. Some things that come to mind: the terminus, bus connections, etc.
 - We would like to see Rep. Capuano's comments.
 - We would like to see the public process run by the consultants themselves, not by a non-involved subcontractor firm. Parsons has people that specialize in community involvement. Kate Fichter seems to be good at this, too.
 - We will get comments to project planners soon on how we would like to see the community involvement process to operate. People that were in the Green Line Advisory Group could be asked for comments on how they would like to see improvements on the process over that group.
 - There are new criteria given great consideration in New Starts federal funding for the Green Line Extension – cost benefit is important, but the benefit to the community is now also very important. We will do well in both types of criteria.

- Urban Ring
 - The Urban Ring is not going to happen right now.
 - There was a discussion on how this could affect the Green Line Extension. This is especially important to consider for a future maintenance facility – if there will be additional trains one day for the Urban Ring.

Other items

- Non-profit tax filings
 - We have everything we need to file our tax returns.
- 501(c) 3 status
 - Updated filing went in on time, and it seems like we have done everything we need to do.
- Office space for STEP
 - Storage space, meeting space, and access to computers to access mapping tools.
 - The office would be publicly available.
 - The person in charge of Somerville Local First is looking for people to share space with, and a space might be shared by many non-profits to share costs. He's thinking of using a store front so that non-profits could be available for people to come in and see what is going on with the different groups.

The next meeting will be February 22nd at the VNA.