

Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership

Regular Meeting of the Steering Committee and Members

Date: Oct 17, 2011, 7:30-9 p.m., at the VNA Community Room, 259 Lowell Ave.

Attendees: Ellin Reisner, Wig Zamore, Andrea Yakovakis, Karen Molloy, Naomi Slagowski, Steve Mulder, Jim McGuinnis, Kristi Chase, Heather Van Aelst, Lynn Weissman, Frank Braman (Meeting notes taken by Karen Molloy.)

Quorum Present? Yes.

VOTES: No.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- MassDOT Green Line Extension Environmental Assessment (EA) and Mitigation Meeting at Somerville High School 6:00 (open house) 6:30 presentation and opportunity for public comment.
- "Mock groundbreaking" event in front of the High School at 6PM (just before the MassDOT hearing above.
- Public Meeting - Mystic Valley Parkway Planning Process (MAPC) November 2, 6:30pm-9pm Medford City Hall - "The focus of this final meeting will be a presentation of draft recommendations MAPC has developed regarding land use, zoning, economic development, and transportation for the area around a potential Green Line Station at Mystic Valley Parkway."

PROCEEDINGS:

- Discussion of talking points for the upcoming MassDOT public meeting on EA and "mitigation for GLX delay" at the High School on the 20th. We should push for the Community Path and Route 16 for mitigation. The City wants a road that links InnerBelt with NorthPoint. It will be critical to push the *full completion* of the project, including the Community Path as part of the trade for some GLX project delay. We should forcefully argue sustainable transportation via active transportation including a fully connected regional path from the exurbs to downtown Boston. Climate benefit, pollution benefit, and active health benefit. We should also mention that the project needs to preserve the potential for a future station between Lechmere and Washington St. and extension to Porter Sq. (on the Union Sq. spur). We will post talking points to the listserv. We should look into using Constant Contact for outreach. Mitigation should be within the GLX corridor, not an unrelated faraway project.
- CCP mock-ground breaking event in front of the high school on the 20th. A permit was approved. CCP is inviting public officials and working with the city on various details including lighting. A press release for the event has gone out to the local media, Rafael from CLF is sending it to the Globe and Herald and Ellin sending it to radio and TV stations. Peter Marquez from Brickbottom and CCP is submitting an Op-Ed for the Somerville Journal. Ken has gotten a quantity of green shovels from ebay. We will put stickers on them "Were shovel ready for the Green Line" and give them out at the event. Need to send event flyer to ECPT listserv. Ellin is getting a banner made.

- Quick debrief on Green Line Extension Steering Group meetings, and “phasing”. Phasing is the new approach to the project. The MBTA and the HDR/Gilbane project team presented details of the new Phased Approach to construction of the GLX to the Green Line Extension Steering Group. Phased Approach would begin with bridge work in 2012 and provide Green Line service to parts of Somerville by the end of 2016, but Medford and most of Somerville would still not likely see Green Line service until mid-2019.

Phase I: Begins in Fall 2012 with the reconstruction of the railroad bridges over Medford Street in Somerville and Harvard Street in Medford. The bridges currently carry commuter rail, Amtrak, and freight trains and will be widened to accommodate two additional Green Line tracks. These initial bridges have the fewest utilities to relocate and require little or no property acquisition. Work on the Harvard St. bridge will include new retaining walls and changes to address flooding that currently occurs on Harvard St. It also will include a grade adjustment to the tracks extending 650 feet on either side of the bridge. Bridge work is estimated to be completed in January 2014. . (The bridges are being redesigned to be elevated 10 ft. No answers yet on why this is necessary. Is it for double-stacking?) Phase I also includes demolition of an MBTA building near NorthPoint, which would provide replacement parking during the Lechmere Station relocation work.

Phase 2: Construct the relocated Lechmere Station, Washington St. and Union Sq. stations; rebuild Washington St. rail bridge; institute road, traffic and pedestrian improvements; and open Green Line service to Washington St./Brickbotton and Union Sq. stations (Start: mid-2013; finish, end of 2016, with service to Washington St. and Union Sq.).

Phase 3: Build the new maintenance facility and storage yard adjacent to the Boston Engine Terminal in Somerville, which officials said are needed to support Phase 4. (Start, TBD, depending on property acquisition timeline; Finish: End of 2017).

Phase 4: Construct the remainder of GLX stations at Gilman Sq. Lowell St., Ball Sq., and College Ave. (start early 2014; finish June 2019).

A Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) is being considered for project construction process over the previous plan to do design/build. This might speed up the process though it contains other risks.

Next Meeting: Monday 14 Nov. 2011, at the VNA Community Room