



Town of Medway
OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

155 Village Street, Medway MA 02053

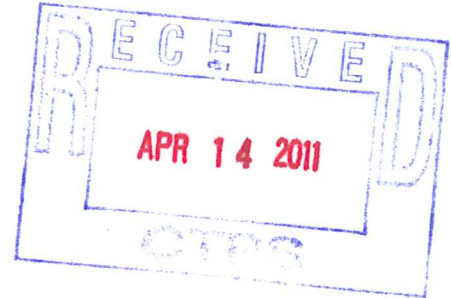
Tel: (508) 533-3264

Fax: (508) 533-3281

Suzanne K. Kennedy
Town Administrator

April 7, 2011

Mr. David Mohler
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Boston Region MPO
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116-3969



**RE: Route 109 Reconstruction Project
Designer Selection Process**

Dear Mr. Mohler:

In the interest of the continued collaboration between the Town of Medway and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, we are pleased to provide this overview of the process undertaken by the Town of Medway toward the selection of a design firm associated with the Route 109 reconstruction project.

In response to the project advertisement in the Central Register, Town website and local press, ten consultants, including GPI, submitted qualifications for review on June 3, 2009. A four member committee comprised of the Department of Public Services Director & Deputy Director, Southwest Area Planning Committee representative, and Planning & Economic Development Board member reviewed the submittals. The submittals were graded in six categories:

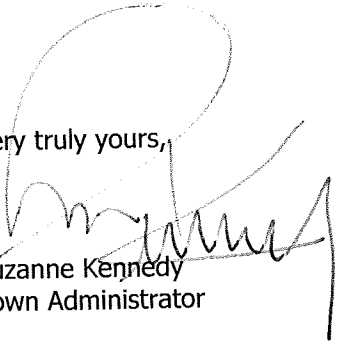
- Prior similar experience.
- Familiarity with the Route 109 corridor and the general project location.
- Past performance on public and private projects.
- Project Managers availability.
- Financial stability.
- Identity and qualifications of the Engineers who will work with the applicant on the project, including professional registration when required.

The following time table illustrates the process used in the recommendation of GPI.

- June 3, 2010 - Qualifications received from 10 firms.
- June, 2010 - Qualifications reviewed and ranked by Selection Committee.
- July 1, 2010 - Four firms are selected for interview; Design Consultants, GPI, Hoyle Tanner, and STV. Interviews held with proposed project teams.
- July 8, 2010 - Selection Committee narrows selection to two firms; GPI and Design Consultants.
- July, 2010 - Supplemental material gathered, references checked.
- August 4, 2010 - Selection Committee recommends GPI.

We hope that this information is helpful in demonstrating the Town's strong commitment in taking appropriate project management actions consistent with Department of Transportation procedures and protocols. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have regarding this or other project matters.

Very truly yours,



Suzanne Kennedy
Town Administrator

Copy: Thomas Holder, DPS
David D'Amico, DPS
Arthur Frost, MassDOT
Ann Sullivan MassDOT
Paul Yorkis, SWAP



March 28, 2011

Mr. James Gillooly
Deputy Commissioner
Boston Transportation Department
Boston City Hall
Boston, MA, 02201

RE: Commonwealth Avenue Phase 2A Improvements, Boston, MA

Dear Mr. Gillooly:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet, discuss and provide input to the Commonwealth Avenue Phase 2A improvement project during the 25% design phase.

As currently envisioned, Phase 2A will extend the highly acclaimed improvements of Phase 1 from Kenmore Square to the BU Bridge to further west to Alcorn Street. As with the Phase 1 project, we strongly support the improvements planned for Phase 2A. The proposed project will provide much needed safety improvements to vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and MBTA Green Line operations as well as significantly enhance the overall streetscape.

The recently completed Phase 1 safety and streetscape improvements have been well received by our students, faculty, staff and the local community.

We look forward to the completion of Phase 2A and look forward to working with you and other stakeholders on the completion of this important local and regional project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Nicksa".

Gary Nicksa
Vice President for Operations

Yvette V. Lancaster
100 Mountfort Street, #2
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

April 7, 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o: Michael Callahan
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

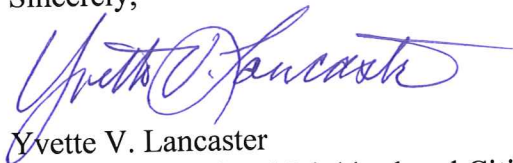
Dear Mr. Callahan:

I am writing to offer my support for the planned phase II of Commonwealth Avenue Project.

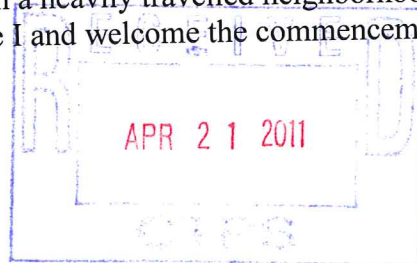
I have been a neighbor for more than a decade and understand the importance of safer pedestrian areas and beautifully landscaped surfaces in a heavily travelled neighborhood. I see first-hand the remarkable improvements in phase I and welcome the commencement of the next phase.

I, therefore, am happy to support this project.

Sincerely,



Yvette V. Lancaster
President, Audubon Neighborhood Citizens Group



*Kenmore Residents Group
464-466 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215*

April 13, 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o: Michael Callahan
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Callahan:

As President of the *Kenmore Residents Group* and as a long-time resident of Kenmore Square, I wish to express strong support for one specific project under discussion at this time. I refer to the plans to continue improvements along Commonwealth Avenue (CAP II).

I would certainly be in favor of an approval of this project. The residents in and around Kenmore Square and Commonwealth Ave have worked very hard to improve the neighborhood. Neighbors stay involved and attend meetings for ongoing projects. What once was an area that was someone unappealing has turned into a beautiful corridor on the way to the downtown area with marked improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

The *Kenmore Residents Group* respectfully supports the continuation of the Commonwealth Avenue improvements.

Sincerely,

Terri North

KENMORE ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 15644
BOSTON, MA 02215

10 April 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o: Michael Callahan
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Callahan:

I am writing regarding the proposed plans to continue improvements along Commonwealth Ave west of Kenmore Square. As President of the Kenmore Association and a local business owner, I am always concerned about projects that will affect the neighborhood especially in and around the area.

For many years, I have attended countless meetings regarding the plans for improvements and beautification in and around the Kenmore Square area. The area is well traveled by local residents and students as well as visitors to the University, the City, and Fenway Park.

We have worked hard in this area to rid the neighborhood of any trash or graffiti and see it replaced with beautiful landscape, benches and brick enhance sidewalks. The continuation of improvements along Commonwealth Avenue further substantiates that progress. We believe that the extension of the project is imperative in the continuity of beautification and safety throughout our beautiful city and therefore, we would wholeheartedly support this effort.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 617-262-6246.

Sincerely,

Pam Beale, President
Kenmore Association

*566 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, M A 02215*

April, 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o: Michael Callahan
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Callahan:

I understand there are plans pending for substantial improvements to Commonwealth Avenue west of the Boston University Bridge. I can assure you that phase one of the project revealed amazing results and we welcome a continuation of that development.

I gladly offer my support.

Sincerely,

Bob Church
Kenmore Towers

April 8, 2011

James Gillooly, Deputy Commissioner
City of Boston Transportation Department
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Gillooly:

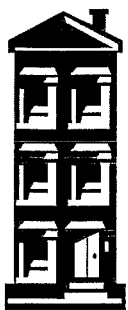
I am contacting you relative to the next phase of improvements along Commonwealth Avenue.

As a resident of Commonwealth Avenue, I believe the first phase of the project has made such a positive impact in our community providing wonderful landscape, and substantial improvements to pedestrian and motor vehicle travel.

I am pleased to support this effort and look forward to the project's completion.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Walsh
566 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215



The Bay State Road Neighborhood Association

131 Bay State Road, 4F • Boston, Massachusetts 02215 • 617-262-8566

5 April 2011

**Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o: Michael Callahan
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116**

President
Alan Weinberger

Vice-President
Carlos H. Tosi

Secretary-Treasurer
Jennifer Battaglino

Executive Board
Jacqueline Parker
Jennifer Battaglino
Alice D. Seale
Carlos Tosi
Marge Saluti

Dear Mr. Callahan:

I am writing regarding the plans to expand the Commonwealth Avenue Improvement Project west of the Boston University Bridge.

As a longtime area resident and President of the Bay State Road Neighborhood Association, I was delighted to see the completion of the improvements along Commonwealth Avenue up to the BU Bridge. The beautifully landscaped areas, widened sidewalks and bicycle paths make travelling Commonwealth Avenue delightful. I was so pleased to share the news that discussions are in the works about the continuation of the next phase.

On behalf of the Bay State Road Neighborhood Association, we strongly support this project and look forward to its completion.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

**Alan Weinberger
President**

100 Mountfort Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

7 April 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
c/o: Michael Callahan
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Mr. Callahan:

I am writing to offer my support for the planned phase II of Commonwealth Avenue Project.

I have been a neighbor for more than a decade and understand the importance of safer pedestrian areas and beautifully landscaped surfaces in a heavily travelled neighborhood. I see first-hand the remarkable improvements in phase I and welcome the commencement of the next phase.

I, therefore, am happy to support this project.

Sincerely,

Yvette Lancaster
President, Audubon Circle Citizens Group

downtown north association

OFFICERS

President
RICHARD BERTMAN
CBT Architects
President-Elect
LOUISE FACKERT
Bay Cove Human Services
Vice Presidents
CHRISTOPHER MAHER
Delaware North Companies - Boston
BONNIE MICHELMAN
Partners HealthCare
JANE FORRESTALL
West End Place
AUSTIN O'CONNOR
Briar Group
ROSALIND GORIN
H. N. Gorin, Inc.
Treasurer
SERENA POWELL
Community Work Services
Secretary
DONNA BRODIGAN
State Financial
Executive Director
ROBERT O'BRIEN
Downtown North Association
Chair of the Board
KARYN McFARLAND
McFarland & Finch/Grubb & Ellis

DIRECTOR EMERITUS

JACK BRYANT
Bryant Engineering
MAURICE N. FINEGOLD
Finegold Alexander + Associates
CARL B. ISRAEL
Shapiro, Israel & Weiner
EARL R. FLANSBURGH
Earl R. Flansburgh & Associates
PETER STEFFIAN
SBA/Steffian Bradley Associates
PETER L. BROWN
Peter Brown & Company

DIRECTORS

CARMINE CAMERATO
AlphaGraphics
FRED COLBERG
Archstone Avenir Apartments
JOSEPH SLESAR
Boston Beer Works
CHRIS MAHER
Boston Bruins
SHAWN SULLIVAN
Boston Celtics
RICHARD WAKEMAN
Boston Development Group
TILLMAN ELLIS
Bulfinch Hotel
PATRICK O'BRIEN
Dimco Construction
EDWIN HADDAD
Dunkin' Donuts
GREG WHITE
Equity Residential
LISA RUSSELL
Grant Thornton, LLP
LINDA ELLENBOGEN
Hawthorne Place Condominium Trust
MICHAEL FRANCIS
Hines Interests
JAHAYRA SANTIAGO
Holiday Inn Express
CHRISTOPHER HART
Institute for Human Centered Design
IVY A. TURNER
Ivy Associates, Inc.
TED WHEATLEY
Jones Lang LaSalle
MICHAEL NEVILLE
Massachusetts General Hospital
HOLT MASSEY
Massey & Company
PAUL SCAPICCHIO
ML Strategies
LINDA CHIN
Onyx Hotel
SCOTT NOGUEIRA
Porter's Bar & Grille
LOUIS YAFFE
PSP Sports Marketing
CHARLES REED
Raymond Property Company
STEVE FELDMAN
Ruberto, Israel & Weiner
PATRICK McMAHON
Simpson Housing
DR. JOOP GREVELINK
Boston Dermatology & Laser Center
CHARLES SANDS
Sovereign Bank
THOMAS CHIOZZI
Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
SAM GOTTLIEB
Stanhope Garage
JIM ENGLISH
Suffolk Construction
JOHN NUCCI
Suffolk University
DAVID GREANEY
Synergy Boston
MARTHA GUERRERO MAGUIRE
West End Community Center

April 20, 2011

Michael Callahan, Central Transportation Planning Staff
Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Support for the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative - Project # 606320

Dear Michael,

The purpose of this correspondence is to reiterate the longstanding, consistent and continuing support of the Downtown North Association and the Downtown North/West End community that we represent for the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative and the larger Boston Crossroads Initiative of which it has long been an integral and important element. Given its crucial location, Causeway Street supports exceptionally high pedestrian volumes to and from regional centers of employment, recreation and transportation at North Station, TD Garden and major institutions like Massachusetts General Hospital; and it clearly needs the kind of physical and functional modernization that will accommodate this remarkably multimodal urban environment safely and efficiently well into the future. In that important respect, the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative is completely consistent with the visions and policies outlined in the preliminary 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, and the nature and scope of the regional multimodal traffic that continually traverses this now deficient roadway provides a clear rationale for identification of the project as a regional need.

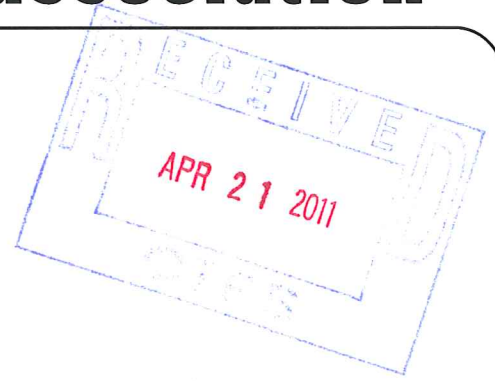
As an active participant in the collaborative Joint Development Group that developed the Boston 2000 Plan, of the Boston 2000 Working Group that reviewed, reaffirmed and amplified that Plan, and of the Mayor's Central Artery Completion Task Force that worked to implement it, I am well aware of the thoughtful origins and planning significance of the Crossroads Initiative as an urban design and development strategy. It was appropriately intended to re-establish and then sustain twelve major historical corridor connections across the redeveloping CAT corridor in Downtown Boston, from Causeway Street to Kneeland Street, which had been interrupted and disrupted by the elevated Central Artery -- and in the case of Causeway Street, by the elevated MBTA Green and Orange Lines as well.

For the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative in particular, which has now fully and finally emerged from the shadows of the elevated transit and highway viaducts that had long been blighted and divided of community, that involves restoring important connections between the West End and North End neighborhoods. It involves supporting and sustaining the ongoing residential and commercial redevelopment of the adjacent Bulfinch Triangle Historic District, which, along with Causeway Street itself, had long been blighted and divided by transit and highway viaducts. And it involves making Causeway Street an active and attractive connection between Downtown Boston and the Kennedy Greenway on the one hand and North Station,

PRESIDENT
RICHARD BERTMAN
bertman@cbtarchitects.com
617-262-4354

DOWNTOWN NORTH ASSOCIATION
c/o CBT Architects
110 Canal Street,
Boston, MA 02114

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ROBERT B. O'BRIEN
rbobrien@rbobrien.com
617-461-6730



TD Garden, the Nashua Street Quadrant and the new Charles River parklands on the other. All of this can and will be accomplished by making Causeway Street the vibrant multi-modal urban boulevard that has long been envisioned by the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative. This is an especially appropriate goal in the case of Causeway Street because it been an urban crossroads for many decades. It is an important center of our regional commuter rail and transit network, with direct links to the Green, Orange and Purple Lines as well as the MBTA parking garage; it is the front door to TD Garden, home to the Celtics and Bruins and long the most active an import entertainment venue in New England; and it is a focal point of the notably mixed-used community that is the contemporary West End, with its diverse residential, professional, cultural civic, institutional and commercial constituencies.

As such, Causeway Street is almost continually traversed by countless residents and workers, patients and patrons, tourists and commuters from across the region and beyond; and they are variously pedestrians, motorists and transit users in the tens of thousands. The purpose of the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative is to provide the physical and functional foundation that will support its inherent multi-modal crossroads role:: to formulate and implement a redesign and reconstruction strategy that will do justice to this thoroughfare and its environs as a urban nexus.

That effort has been informed and influenced by an active and engaged community participation process under the aegis of the Bulfinch Triangle Citizens Advisory Committee, which has also been involved in all other aspects of the redevelopment phases of the CAT and MBTA North Station Improvements Projects. Throughout that community participation process, it has been and remains abundantly clear that the Downtown North/West End community supports the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative; and it does so because it is consistent with values and priorities of our neighborhood and because it reflects and reinforces what will continue to make our community as special and successful in the future as it has been in the past.

On that basis, the Downtown North Association hereby recommends and requests that the Metropolitan Planning Organization join us and other community-based organizations and public agencies in also supporting the Causeway Street Crossroads Initiative and the Boston Crossroads Initiative as a whole. What is at stake is improved livability, mobility, safety and aesthetics, as well as an enhanced quality and variety of life for all concerned -- not only in our neighborhood but also throughout the Boston metropolitan area.

Sincerely,



Robert B. O'Brien

DNA Executive Director

Co-Chair of the Bulfinch Triangle Citizens Advisory Committee

cc: James Gillooly of the Boston Transportation Department
Jonathan Greeley of the Boston Redevelopment Authority'
Richard Bertman, President of the Downtown North Association

DOWNTOWN NORTH ASSOCIATION & COMMUNITY

The Downtown North Association (DNA) is a not-for-profit coalition, which represents the business, institutional, professional, recreational and residential interests in the mixed-use community historically known as the West End. It is bounded by City Hall Plaza on the south, Charles River on the north, Beacon Hill on the west and the North End on the east. The purpose of the Association is to encourage and contribute to the continued economic, social and physical revitalization and redevelopment of the Downtown North/West community as a whole. The strategies employed to accomplish that mission include collaborative planning and proactive advocacy regarding the full range of issues and opportunities that challenge and confront our neighborhood, emphasizing communication, coordination and cooperation with the public agencies and private organizations that will influence and facilitate a more cohesive and successful community.

The more than one hundred member organizations of the Downtown North Association represent a broad cross-section of the Downtown North/West End community, which encompasses a variety of major districts including:

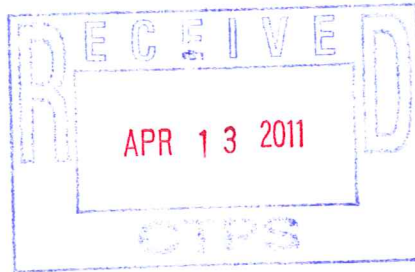
- * The residential neighborhood that includes the former Charles River Park, West End Place, the Hawthorne Place, Whittier Place and Strada 234 Condominiums, the Amy Lowell House and the Blackstone as well the new Charles River Plaza retail and office complex, Holiday Inn Select, a major professional building on Staniford Street, the West End Library, Old West Church and the Harrison Gray Otis House.*
- * The Bulfinch Triangle, immediately south of Causeway Street, which is home to most of the retail, bar, restaurant and hotel establishments and professional firms in the area and contains more than five acres of redevelopment parcels to be made available with the demolition of the CAT and Green Line elevated structures.*
- * The North Station Economic Development Area, immediately north of Causeway Street, which includes North Station itself, TD Garden, the Tip O'Neill Federal Building, the Causeway/Strada 234 and Lovejoy Wharf buildings, and the southern portal of the Zakim/Bunker Hill Bridge, as well as the major redevelopment parcels on the site of the old Boston Garden.*
- * The adjacent Nashua Street Quadrant, which includes Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, the new Nashua Street Residences Project and the new Nashua Meadows Park, as well as a number of important new development parcels.*
- * The medical sector, in the Cambridge Street/Charles Street area, which includes Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary, Shiners Burns Hospital for Children and the Scheppens Eye Research Institute, as well as the new Liberty Hotel & Conference Center in the former Charles Street Jail.*
- * The northern portion of Government Center, which includes the new Edward Brooke Suffolk County Courthouse, the Lindemann Center and Hurley State Office Building, Government Center Garage, the Area A-1 Police Station, the New Chardon Street Post Office, Channel 7, One Bowdoin Place and One Bulfinch Place.*



For a thriving New England

CLF Massachusetts 62 Summer Street
Boston MA 02110
P: 617.350.0990
F: 617.350.4030
www.clf.org

April 12, 2011



David Mohler
Executive Director
Office of Transportation Planning
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Room 4105
Boston, MA 02116-3969

RE: GreenDOT Implementation in Transportation Planning

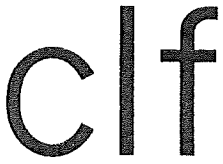
Dear Mr. Mohler:

Thank you for your leadership in developing the innovative and forward-looking GreenDOT policy directive ("GreenDOT"). I write to express our strong interest in MassDOT's plans to account for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in transportation planning, as required by GreenDOT. I, and my colleagues Nancy Goodman of the Environmental League of Massachusetts and Wendy Landman of WalkBoston, recently had the pleasure of meeting with Ned Codd and Catherine Cagle of your office to discuss our efforts as part of the new Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA) Coalition, and to enquire about the status of GreenDOT implementation, particularly with respect to transportation planning.

At the suggestion of Mr. Codd and Ms. Cagle, CLF also contacted the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization ("Boston MPO") and spoke with Anne McGahan in an effort to gain a better understanding of how the MPO is planning to incorporate GreenDOT's requirements into its regional planning, including the 2011 MPO long range transportation plan, *Paths to a Sustainable Region*, due to be completed in August 2011 (2011 LRTP). Despite these efforts, many of our questions remain unanswered. We hope that you can help us better understand this important component of GreenDOT.

A key GreenDOT goal is GHG emissions reductions. The Commonwealth has specifically incorporated GreenDOT into its Global Warming Solutions Act implementation plan, the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2020 ("Climate Plan"). See Climate Plan at pp. 66-67. The Climate Plan makes plain that "GreenDOT is intended to fulfill the requirements of several state laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and MassDOT policies, including the Global Warming Solutions Act, the Green Communities Act, the Healthy Transportation Compact, and the 'Leading by Example' Executive Order Number 484 by Governor Patrick." *Id.* at 66.

Specifically, the Climate Plan provides that:



conservation law foundation

Transportation long-range planning and project prioritization and selection: Long-range planning documents, including statewide planning documents (e.g. the Strategic Plan, State Freight Plan, and MassDOT Capital Investment Plan), as well as the long-range Regional Transportation Plans from the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), *must address MassDOT's three sustainability goals and plan for reducing GHG emissions over time.* Similarly, the shorter-range regional and state Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs and STIP), under which particular projects are chosen for funding in the coming four years, *must be consistent with the Commonwealth's GHG reduction target.* This will require that the MPOs and MassDOT balance highway system expansion projects with other projects that support smart growth development and promote public transit, walking and bicycling. In addition, the project programming mix included in the RTPs, TIPs and STIP can contribute to GHG reduction through prioritizing roadway projects that enable improved system operational efficiency, without expanding overall roadway system capacity.

Id. (emphasis supplied). GreenDOT, as incorporated into the Climate Plan, requires that:

Statewide planning documents (including the Strategic Plan and Capital Investment Plan) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) long-range Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) will integrate the three GreenDOT Goals. *These planning documents will evaluate GHG emissions and ensure that GHG emissions are reduced over time, consistent with the Climate Protection and Green Economy Act.*

GreenDOT at Exhibit B (emphasis supplied). GreenDOT also requires that:

Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) *will include an evaluation of overall greenhouse gas emissions from the project programs, and will need to be developed in a manner that fits into an overall state greenhouse gas reduction target.* This will require that the MPOs and MassDOT balance highway system expansion projects with other projects that support smart growth development and promote public transit, walking and bicycling.



Id. (emphasis supplied). The Climate Plan emphasizes the GreenDOT requirement that project selection be prioritized on the basis of GHG emissions analyses, and healthy transportation and smart growth impacts. *See* Climate Plan at 66.

Neither GreenDOT nor the Climate Plan specify how GHG emissions will be evaluated by planners, or how transportation plans will now be developed in order to take into account—and achieve—the Commonwealth’s overall GHG emissions reduction target. MassDOT and the Boston MPO were not able to provide during our discussions specific information in response to our questions about GHG accounting and planning to achieve mandated reductions. As well, it appears that MassDOT currently is not contemplating any process that would make more transparent and/or elicit public comment or input on its efforts in developing an implementation strategy.

We are eager to work with MassDOT to advance GreenDOT, and we look forward to further discussions with your team about how we, and our T4MA partners, can best support MassDOT’s efforts. As well, to better enable us to partner with you, it would be very helpful if MassDOT could answer the following questions:

- How will transportation project GHG emissions be quantified for planning purposes? Will the GHG emission impacts of each project be quantified individually and then combined at any planning stage?
- Which agency will be responsible for quantifying GHG emissions associated with transportation projects? The MPO? MassDOT? The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”)? Individual project proponents?
- If estimates are generated by different agencies or entities, how will MassDOT ensure that the quantification protocols for estimating GHG emission impacts are consistent? It is our understanding that MassDOT and DEP, for example, currently do not employ the same approach for quantifying GHG emissions from mobile sources.
- What analytic method(s), metrics, and quantification protocol(s) will be used to evaluate GHG emissions? Which model will be used for estimating vehicle miles traveled? Will emissions associated with induced demand be included?

We appreciate that we will have the opportunity to comment on individual planning documents in the future. The formal comment period for the 2011 LRTP, for example, will begin on June 13, 2011. To ensure a meaningful opportunity to comment, however, we need to better understand these issues now. As you know, the U.S. Department of Transportation Planning Assistance and Standards regulations require proactive public involvement processes and opportunities for early and continuing involvement. *See* 23 CFR 450.212. As part of that public



involvement process, the State is required to provide “reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the plan and STIP.” 23 CFR 450.212(a)(3).

We believe that GreenDOT can be a nation-leading example if properly implemented, and we are grateful for your—and your team’s—vision and commitment. Thank you in advance for your assistance and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melissa A. Hoffer", is written over a light gray circular stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Melissa A. Hoffer, Esq.

- cc Jeffrey B. Mullan, Secretary, MassDOT
Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Secretary EOEEA
Maev Valley Bartlett, Assistant Secretary, EOEEA
Catherine Cagle, Manager, Sustainable Transportation, MassDOT
Ned Codd, P.E., Director Program Development, OTP, MassDOT
Hayes Morrison, TIP Program Manager, Boston MPO
Marc Draisen, Executive Director, MAPC
Nancy Goodman, VP for Policy, ELM
Wendy Landman, Executive Director, WalkBoston
T4MA



Friends of the Community Path
112 Belmont Street
Somerville, MA 2143
617.776.7769
friendspath@yahoo.com
www.pathfriends.org/scp/

April 27, 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Attn: Project Manager Anne McGahan
mcgahan@ctps.org
publicinformation@bostonmpo.org

Re: 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, Paths to a Sustainable Region

To Ms. McGahan and the MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee:

We are writing on behalf of the Friends of the Community Path, a community group of almost a 1000 members, formed ten years ago. Our mission is to extend the Path in Somerville 2.3 miles eastward to Cambridge to connect the 23-mile Minuteman Bikeway network to the 23-mile Charles River path network. This will result in almost 50 miles of continuous region-wide paths with multi-modal connections with the future Green Line extension

As you know, until recently, TIP funds had been programmed for the Community Path and the City of Somerville recently applied for 2012 TIP funding for the construction of the next section of the Path, from Cedar to Lowell Street in Somerville.

We are advocating that the remainder of the Path extension be constructed together with the Green Line Extension. The proposed Community Path connector from Lowell Street (Somerville) to Lechmere/NorthPoint (East Cambridge) cannot be designed and built without sharing infrastructure, right-of-way, and heavy construction with the Green Line extension. As such, there is time-critical need for additional Path construction funding along with a regional need for this active transportation connection.

We therefore request, for the following reasons, that the MPO include the Community Path connector as a top priority bicycle and pedestrian transportation project in the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan: "Paths to a Sustainable Region".

LRTP Criteria: *Transportation Needs Assessments and Visions and Policies*

We have reviewed with great interest the Long Range Transportation Plan draft materials posted on the website, including the *Transportation Needs Assessments* and the *Visions and Policies* documents:

http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/3_programs/1_transportation_plan/plan_2035_draft_materials.html

http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/3_programs/1_transportation_plan/Visions_and_Policies.pdf

This project is perfectly suited to the LRTP regional sustainable transportation needs and to helping fulfill these visions and policies. We believe that the Community Path project also will score well on the MPO's revised TIP evaluation criteria, as it will connect existing path (multi-use trail) networks, thereby synergizing their transportation potential.

According to the Boston MPOs' 2009 booklet (page 4), *Transportation Planning in the Boston Region: Be Informed. Be Involved*, the MPO area has 68 miles of regional multi-use trails. However, the draft LRTP materials describe the fact that many transportation corridors have few or no multi-use trails and that often there are critical gaps preventing their real use as a regional active transportation network. It's also clear from the bicycle use of the existing trails and city streets that there is a high demand for more trails like the Community Path extension. Because of the population density of Somerville and the critical connection the Path will make, no other proposed multi-use trail will generate the usage of the Community Path when it is extended.

Regional, Local, and Transit Significance

Extending the Community Path will have profound regional and local significance. There are many important reasons to complete this off-road bicycle and pedestrian connection.

- As mentioned above, this proposed Community Path connector from Lowell Street (Somerville) to Lechmere/NorthPoint (East Cambridge) cannot be designed and built without sharing infrastructure, right-of-way, and heavy construction with the Green Line extension.
- The Community Path will connect the walking and biking neighborhoods of Somerville and Cambridge to four of the new Green Line Extension stations, bringing riders to the MBTA system in the most cost-effective manner. Harnessing the synergy of these transportation modes with mass transit will vastly increase Green Line extension ridership at a low cost per rider.
- The 2.3 mile Community Path connector project is the missing link (as shown in the attached regional map) will link the Minuteman Bikeway network and Charles River path network, producing a total of almost 50 miles of continuous multi-use paths, a zero-emission active transportation network.
- This Path will confer a regional network of connectivity to many cities and towns to the north and west (see regional path networks at the end of the letter): Bedford, Lexington, Belmont, Arlington, Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford to the Red and Green Lines (in Cambridge and Somerville) and to Boston, Waltham, Watertown, and Newton.
- Similar to the 25-year old Southwest Corridor Park (where a Path runs next to the Orange Line tracks, providing multi-modal access to those T-stations), the 2.3 mile Community Path extension will provide a safe ADA-compliant, zero-emissions, traffic-free, off-road route for

pedestrians, bicyclists and other active transportation users from the communities northwest of Boston direct to downtown Boston.

- The Somerville Community Path is the eastern end of the 104-mile, cross-state Mass Central Rail Trail which is already 26% completed.
- It will provide needed recreational and open space for low-income, minority, and environmental justice neighborhoods in Somerville, especially in East Somerville. The section of this Path through the East Somerville and Inner Belt has the densest environmental justice and car-less household populations of any segment. It seems incongruous that this area would be among the only neighborhoods with no direct off-road Path access -- as compared to the other more affluent communities that already have access to the Minuteman and Charles River path.
- The Path and Green Line extensions will run near 6 Somerville public schools to create safe, active routes to schools and work (for parents and older Somerville High School students) with good air quality, helping to fight the epidemics of childhood obesity and asthma.

Prior Inclusion in Other State, Regional, and Local Transportation Plans

The Community Path extension is clearly already a priority project to the State, regional, and communities as indicated by the following facts:

- The Path is also listed in the official 2007 Boston Region MPO Regional Bicycle Plan: http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/4_resources/1_reports/1_studies/4_bicycle/regional_bicycle.pdf
- As the eastern end of the Mass Central Rail Trail, the Community Path is the subject of this 1997 study by the MPO: http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/4_resources/1_reports/1_studies/4_bicycle/central_mass_rail_trail_study_1997.pdf
- Until recent temporary program funding changes, the Path had been allocated \$4.5 million by the Boston MPO.
- The Somerville Community Path is listed in the official 2008 Massachusetts Bicycle Transportation Plan: <http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/common/downloads/bikeplan/BikePlanNoLinks.pdf>
- In the MassDOT Capital Investment Plan, MassDOT has identified 97 miles of new high-priority shared-use paths “that connect to urbanized areas, extend existing paths, and maximize the transportation utility of the system” as part of a Bay State Greenway network to be completed in the next 10 years. The Community Path connector is 3 of these 97 miles: http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/planning/documents/CIP_2011_2015.pdf
- The Environmental Impact Report Certificates from the Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs directs MassDOT to plan for the Community Path in its Green Line Extension design.
- The Somerville Community Path is shown on the MassDOT Bike Network Map: <http://services.massdot.state.ma.us/MapTemplate/BikeNetwork>
- MassDOT has committed to design and fund the infrastructure shared between the Path and the Green Line extension from Lowell Street to Inner Belt (as estimated \$10 million).
- The Green Line Extension design and engineering phase is commencing very soon – including the Community Path. We also hope in the future that MassDOT/MBTA will also

decide to design the remainder of the Path, from Inner Belt to where it will link with the North Point paths, at a minimum of a 10% design to show width, routing options, slopes, bridge locations, etc, and what other factors it depends on (such as a highway or transit bridge attached to it).

- The Community Path is part of the proposed Merrimac River – Charles River Corridor of the BayState Greenway Implementation Plan (to be posted to the web soon).
- The existing Community Path is shown on the Bay State Greenway map and as a proposed path to be completed on the transportation maps of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.
- The City of Somerville includes the Community Path as a priority in its Open Space and Recreation Plan, its draft Bicycle Transportation Plan, and in the Comprehensive Plan being developed. Toward this goal, the City has already invested about a half million dollars in the design and construction of the existing sections of the community path, plus significant staff time of the City's bicycle and pedestrian coordinator and other city staff.
- NorthPoint developers have already agreed, in a 2003 Special Permit from the City of Cambridge that is still binding, to build the Path through their development (mostly in Cambridge) to both westward, toward the Fitchburg line tracks; and west, to connect the Charles River Path network (presently being extended to Charlestown via the North Bank bridge). One section of the latter has already been built.
- Everyone from local communities to businesses to MassDOT seems to want the Path extension. There are no detractors to delay the project!

With Federal Policies in mind:

- The Federal DOT's new Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations emphasizes multi-modal transportation systems. This Green Transportation Corridor meets Secretary of Transportation LaHood objectives and the Federal DOT's new Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations emphasizing multi-modal transportation systems. Secretary LaHood has stated that: *This is the end of favoring motorized transportation at the expense of non-motorized.* " <http://fastlane.dot.gov/2010/03/my-view-from-atop-the-table-at-the-national-bike-summit.html>
- The federal Department of Transportation's interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities policy is to "develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health." <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/smartgrowthusa/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/dot-hud-epa-partnership-agreement.pdf>

With State Policies and Interests in mind:

- The Community Path extension will provide convenient Green Line access, increased ridership at a low cost, and meet MassDOT's Green DOT sustainable and active transportation goals. We hope that Community Path construction will be the first bicycle/pedestrian legacy of the MassDOT's GreenDOT initiative.

- The Community Path extension will also meet Commonwealth's Healthy Transportation Compact, which directs MassDOT and other agencies to "Develop policies to create a transportation system that increases opportunities for physical activity particularly safe bicycle and pedestrian travel along and across roadways in urban and suburban areas".
- Remarkably, Massachusetts ranks *last* in the nation in allocating federal funds for alternative transportation projects. Funding the Community Path will be the most cost-effective use of such limited funds. <http://tinyurl.com/4xdqpeo>

The Friends have been working closely with the City of Somerville and MassDOT on extending the Community Path but additional funding is needed. We hope our public comments have presented the regional significance, strengths, and future need for the Community Path. We appreciate this opportunity to submit these comments and thankfully acknowledge the past support of the MPO. By including the Community Path a top bicycle/pedestrian priority in the LRTP, it will acknowledge its critical importance and increase the chances of future funding.

Thank you very much,

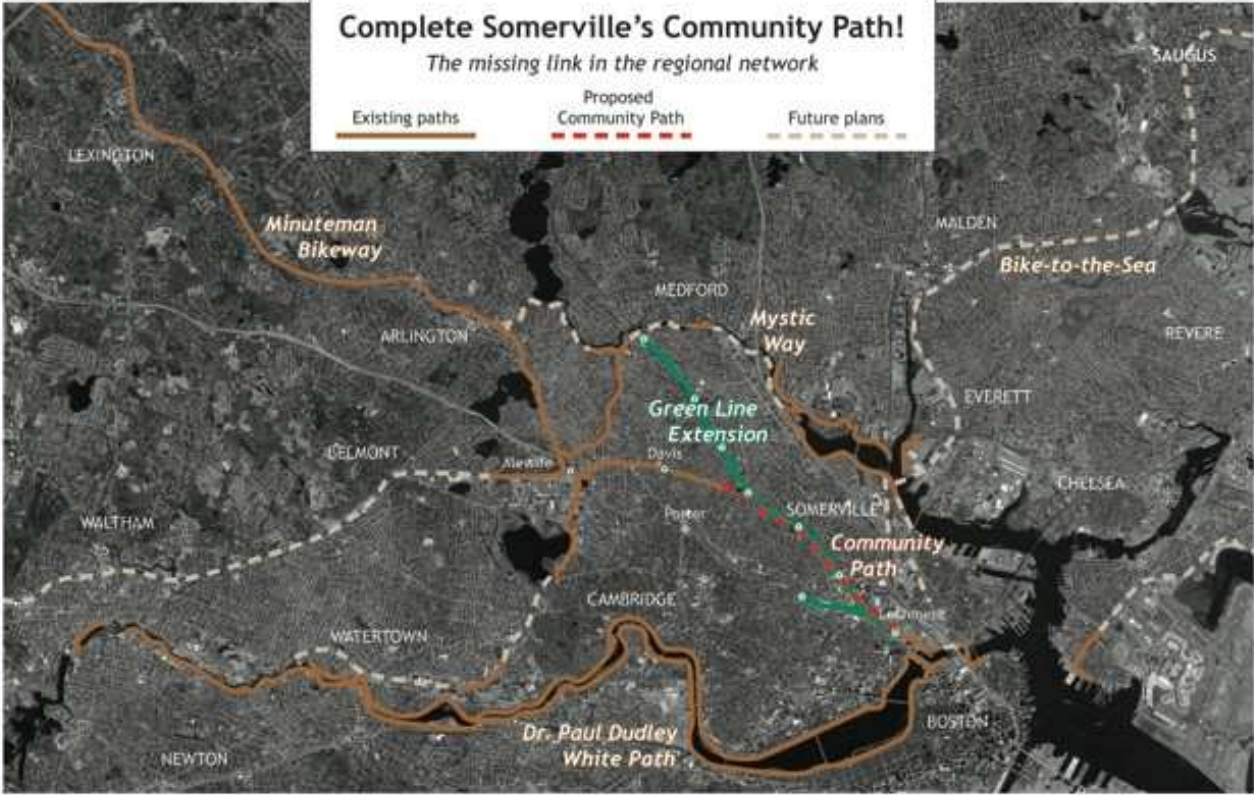
Sincerely,



Lynn Weissman and Alan Moore
Co-Presidents, Friends of the Community Path

"To Lechmere – and beyond!"

CC: Congressman Michael Capuano
Transportation Secretary Jeffrey Mullan
MassDOT Board of Directors
Mayor Joseph Curtatone, City of Somerville
Somerville Board of Aldermen
Senator Patricia Jehlen
Representative Denise Provost
Representative Carl Sciortino
Representative Timothy Toomey
David Mohler, MassDOT
Kate Fichter, MassDOT
Michael Lambert, City of Somerville
Kathleen Zeigenfuss, City of Somerville
Ellin Reisner, STEP
Chelsea Clarke, Groundworks Somerville





Friends of the Community Path
112 Belmont Street
Somerville, MA 2143
617.776.7769
friendspath@yahoo.com
www.pathfriends.org/scp/

May 3, 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Attn: Project Manager Anne McGahan
mcgahan@ctps.org
publicinformation@bostonmpo.org

Re: Addendum - Long Range Transportation Plan, "Paths to a Sustainable Region"

To Ms. McGahan and the MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee:

Please consider this an addendum to our April 27 request to include the Community Path in the list of the Projects and Programs by Investment Category (Expansion – bike/ped), as released April 5, 2011, of the Long Range Transportation Plan, "Paths to a Sustainable Region." After seeing the April 5 draft list of bike/ped projects (<http://tinyurl.com/3dtqj4s>), we'd like to emphasize the regional call significance of this vital link between two of our most important off-street paths, along with the safety benefits. This 2.3 miles of unbuilt path is all that's left before we can travel off-road all the way from Bedford to Boston and to towns west.

This week, the MPO has received dozens of letters asking for the Community Path connector to be included in the LRTP. And in March, Transportation Improvement Manager Hayes Morrison received 138 letters in support of TIP funding the Community Path, further demonstrating the tremendous regional support for this bicycle-pedestrian project.

Notably, many supporters wrote of their yearnings for the safety of an off-road Path to Boston versus their currently treacherous on-road commutes. Some relevant quotes from these letters:

"Without the path extension, it's only a matter of time will another cyclist will be seriously injured or killed on the streets of Cambridge or Somerville."

"Scares the daylight out of me to be in that vicious auto traffic, but I take my time, wear my helmet, and hope for the best. Spent the weekend looking after my 24 year old son recovering from shoulder surgery after being hit by a car on his bike, but that's another story."

“... the roads are unsafe for pedestrians, bikers, and drivers.... I think that the extension of the bike path will take some of the bikers off the streets (as well as some of the joggers, who also jog year-round in unsafe conditions.)”

“Additionally, the bike paths have a merit that the street bike lanes do not. They are the only place where children can learn to ride and ride safely for extended periods of time.”

According Boston MPOs' 2009 booklet (page 4), *Transportation Planning in the Boston Region: Be Informed. Be Involved*, the Boston MPO area has 23,000 lane-miles of roads and just 68 miles of regional bicycle trails. The Community Path would be a major connector for the existing path (bicycle trail) networks, synergizing their transportation potential as well ridership on the future Green Line extension.

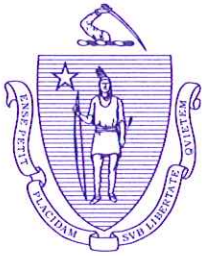
We thank you for the MPO's past support and hope you will take this opportunity to include the Path in the Universe of Projects in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Sincerely,

Lynn Weissman and Alan Moore
Co-Presidents, Friends of the Community Path

“To Lechmere – and beyond!”

CC: Congressman Michael Capuano
Transportation Secretary Jeffrey Mullan
MassDOT Board of Directors
Mayor Joseph Curtatone, City of Somerville
Somerville Board of Aldermen
Senator Patricia Jehlen
Representative Denise Provost
Representative Carl Sciortino
Representative Timothy Toomey
David Mohler, MassDOT
Kate Fichter, MassDOT
Michael Lambert, City of Somerville
Kathleen Zeigenfuss, City of Somerville
Ellin Reisner, STEP
Chelsea Clarke, Groundworks Somerville



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

May 2, 2011

David J. Mohler, Chair
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Belmont Trapelo Road Corridor Project, 60468

Dear Mr. Mohler,

We write primarily to thank you and the members of the MPO for your ongoing support of our Belmont Trapelo Road Corridor Project.

We appreciate that you have included \$329,900 in additional design funding for it in the Draft Amendment #4 to the TIP and eagerly await final approval of those funds. We also appreciate your long recognition of the regional significance of this project as reflected in the Financial Plan for the Pathways to 2030 document.

Based on our confidence in your planning process, the Town of Belmont has already spent over \$2.7 million towards the project -- investing \$1.4 million in the cost of bringing the project to 75% design level, which has already been submitted for review, and \$1.5 million towards subsurface improvements, replacing water pipes through the length of the corridor. In addition, National Grid has completed installation of gas lines down the length of the corridor. At the present, the corridor is criss-crossed by trench patches reflecting all of this subsurface work in anticipation of construction.

We were pleased to see that the project was highlighted among the needed projects in the Northwest Corridor in your draft 2035 plan. We noticed with some concern that it was not

explicitly mentioned in the regional chapter, but we understand that that chapter speaks mostly to much larger highway projects.

We do hope and trust that you will continue to include it in the financially constrained LRTP and ultimately place it on the TIP for 2015. We would be even happier if it could be included sooner. We see no reason why we could not be ready to proceed in Fiscal 2012 and are certain that we would be ready in Fiscal 2013. At present we are working in collaboration with MassDOT engineers on the 100% design and we believe that we have already resolved all material issues. We anticipate securing the right-of-way by spring 2012.

We thank you very kindly once again for all of your support for the project and are very respectful of the difficult decision-making that you must make given the limited funds at your disposal.

We are very eager to respond to any questions or concerns that you might have.

Thanks again for your consideration.

Sincerely,



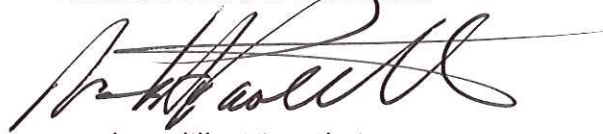
Steven A. Tolman
STATE SENATOR



Ralph Jones, Chair
Belmont Board of Selectmen



William N. Brownsberger
STATE REPRESENTATIVE



Mark Paolillo, Vice-Chair
Belmont Board of Selectmen



Angelo Firenze
Belmont Board of Selectmen



CHARLES RIVER
conservancy

FOUR BRATTLE STREET
CAMBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS
0 2 1 3 8

617-608-1410 t
617 491 1245 f

crc@thecharles.org
www.thecharles.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Renata von Tscharnher
President
Ronald Axelrod
Jay Baldwin
Daniel Calano
Catherine Donaher
Michael Epstein
Virginia Foote
Catherine Henn
Mark Krackiewicz
Debra Iles
Nancy Schön
Karen Schwartzman
Lisa Stone

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Ronald Axelrod, *Chair*
Jeffrey Bilezikian
Dennis Carlone
John Casagrande
Philip W. Crutchfield
John DeVillars
David Ellis
Paul Fremont-Smith Jr.
Nicholas Godfrey
John Isaacson
Steven Kropper
Frans Lawaetz
Henry Lee
Linda Lerner
Harry Mattison
Mary Newmann
Barbara Norfleet
Geraldine Pangaro
Matthew Petrie
Joan Pickett
Patricia Pratt
Candace Roosevelt
Bruce Schwogler
Amy Segal
Raul Solano
Christopher Stevens
James Storrow
Mary Tambiah
Paul Walker
John T. Williams

May 4, 2011

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
Attn: Project Manager Anne McGahan
mcgahan@ctps.org
publicinformation@bostonmpo.org

RE: Please include Community Path connector in the LRTP

Dear Project Manager Anne McGahan and the Boston MPO Transportation Planning and Programming Committee:

The Charles River Conservancy (CRC) appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments to support the work of Friends of the Community Path. I am writing to urge the MPO to include the Community Path connector as a top priority bicycle and pedestrian transportation project in the Universe of Projects in the next Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), "Paths to a Sustainable Region." This will maximize the chances of the State seeking and allocating future funding for the Community Path.

There are several critical reasons why we support the Community Path connector, and are advocating that this project be labeled a priority in the LRTP:

- 1) The proposed 2-1/2 mile Community Path will link the 23-mile Minuteman Bikeway and the 23-mile Charles River path networks. As the CRC's primary goal is to make the parklands more active, attractive, and accessible to all, we fully support the work of Community Path to provide a continuous path for commuters and recreational users that leads to the Charles River pathways.
- 2) As the CRC provides stewardship of the Cambridge parklands, we appreciate that the Community Path will connect the walking and biking neighborhoods of Somerville and Cambridge to four of the new Green Line Extensions (GLX).
- 3) With our ongoing efforts to construct a skatepark in North Point Park, and our recent advocacy work concerning Education First's (EF) development in this area, we look forward to the numerous community benefits that a greater sustainable transportation network will provide. According to information from Community Path, North Point developers have already agreed to, in a



2003 Special Permit from the City of Cambridge that is still binding, to build the Path through their development (mostly in Cambridge) to both westward, toward the Fitchburg line tracks; and west, to connect the Charles River Path network (presently being extended to Charlestown via the North Bank bridge). One section of the latter has already been built.

The Community Path connector must be designed and built with the GLX, since it must share infrastructure, right-of-way, and heavy construction with the GLX. Since the GLX is required to start construction in the next few years, additional funding will be needed to complete the Path.

The benefits of the Community Path are clear, and will continue to serve the greater Boston community for decades to come. It is important that Boston prioritizes sustainable transportation to make our citizens more active and our city more environmentally conscious. This can be accomplished by making the Community Path a priority in the LRTP, so that this project has the potential to receive the funding that it merits.

Yours truly,

Renata von Tscharnner

Renata von Tscharnner
Founder & President
Charles River Conservancy

The 2008 "Massachusetts Bicycle Transportation Plan" describes the primary route of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail as proceeding from the end of the existing section into Concord Center, connecting with the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway in Lexington and Arlington and continuing on to Cambridge and Boston. This route makes more cost/benefit sense than the route on the more remote rail bed being promoted by recreational bicyclists under the guise of transportation because transportation funds provide the funding source.

Acton's feasibility study by FST stated that most rail trail users drive to a trail to use it. Evidence of this is the lack of sufficient parking spaces in Chelmsford and Westford to accommodate those coming to use the rail trail in those towns.

Sudbury officials repeatedly assert that the proposed BFRT is for recreation, not transportation. Trail counts on existing trails confirm most trips on the local rail trails are made on weekends. One must assume these trips are more for pleasure than for commuting.

At last year's Municipal TIP Day, Sudbury's DPW director, on information from the Acton Town Planner, told the MPO that the estimated construction cost for the BFRT through Acton, Concord and Sudbury was currently \$3 million per mile. This cost, combined with what has already been spent, plus the cost of purchasing the Sudbury and Framingham sections from CSX and the construction costs in Sudbury and Framingham as well as the bridge over route 2, would mean the cost to build the BFRT in the present day is fast approaching the \$60-70 million range.

Moreover, the route through these three towns is mostly through woods, sensitive riparian zones and conservation land. Sudbury's Town-commissioned "Four-Season Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation" determined that almost half of the proposed Sudbury rail bed route for the BFRT is so important to wildlife that there could be no mitigation from trail construction and a prospective trail should be re-routed away from the rail bed.

Another environmental consequence of trail construction is, if the BFRT were to continue from Carlisle to Framingham on the old rail bed, and the trail were built to AASHTO standards, approximately 65 acres of carbon dioxide absorbing vegetation would be removed. The negative impact on wetlands from trail construction is highlighted by the fact that a rail trail in Concord, if built, will be exempted from the 2010 local wetlands bylaw, otherwise, it could not receive permits.

There is also the inherent presence of contamination along rail beds, an issue of which people are often unaware or one which people choose to ignore. It is hoped that this issue would be fully examined if the BFRT were to be constructed on the rail bed.

As currently is the case on the existing Chelmsford section, the path in these three towns would not have lighting and would not be plowed. Nor is this route convenient or relevant for connecting to schools in any of these towns, although proponents would lead the public to believe otherwise. The path through Acton would require bicyclists to leave it to travel on route 2A to access businesses. In West Concord, the old rail bed does not provide a more convenient or direct access route to the train or businesses.

Some say a bike trail would give an economic boost to a town, yet according to Hudson (Assabet Rail Trail) officials, one third of Hudson's downtown business district is empty. Disappointingly, the Assabet Trail did not provide the hoped for economic boost.

The BFRT through Acton, Concord, Sudbury and the more unpopulated area of Framingham, doesn't make economic or environmental sense. There is no tangible evidence that constructing a trail on the old rail bed would lead to improvement in reducing air pollution, provide congestion mitigation or become a realistic transportation route. At the MAGIC meeting held in Acton last year, a bicycling enthusiast who lives in Acton and works in Chelmsford, said he, like most people, did not have the time to get up earlier to commute to work by bike, nor did he want to arrive at work covered in sweat.

It seems that diminishing transportation funds would be better spent on projects that move larger numbers of people to meet real commuting needs, such as providing buses to central transportation centers. Increasing mass transportation opportunities on a consistent daily basis regardless of heat, cold, rain, snow, sleet, or darkness in order to really help relieve congestion and cut vehicle emissions, is what's needed. It is not a greater environmental benefit to build expensive, remote rail trails through sensitive wildlife habitat in affluent suburbs to which most people drive for weekend recreation.

Thank you.

Carole Wolfe
Sudbury