

## **GREEN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT**

### **DECEMBER 19, 2017 COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP – MEETING NOTES**

**LOCATION OF MEETING:** Visiting Nurse Association of Eastern Massachusetts, 259 Lowell St, Somerville, MA

**DATE/TIME OF MEETING:** December 19, 2017; 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

**ATTENDANCE:** (See sign-in sheets for list of attendees from the general public.)

**CWG Members:** Jason Ales (East Cambridge), Michelle Bayesh (Magoun Square), Fred Dello Russo (Medford City Council), Jennifer Dorsen (Union Square), Lauren Drago (City of Somerville), Ryan Dunn (Mogoun Square), Mark Johns (DivcoWest – East Cambridge Developer), Jim McGuinness (Union Square), Justin Moeling (Gilman Square), Polly Pook (East Somerville), Brad Rawson (City of Somerville), Laurel Ruma (College Ave), Alex Stein (City of Cambridge), Tegan Teich (City of Cambridge)

**MassDOT/MBTA:** John Dalton – MBTA GLX Program Manager, Terry McCarthy – Deputy Program Manager of Stakeholder Engagement

**GLX Project Team:** Randy Henke, Martin Nee, Joe Sgroi

**PURPOSE:** First meeting of newly established GLX Community Working Group (CWG) formed to help engage and foster communication with the communities along the GLX corridor by meeting with representative members (both residents and officials) of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford.

**BACKGROUND:** The Green Line Extension (GLX) Project is an initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), in coordination with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). The project intent is to extend existing MBTA Green Line service from Lechmere Station through the northwest corridor communities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. The goals of the project are to increase mobility; encourage public transit usage; improve regional air quality; ensure a more equitable distribution of transit services; and support opportunities for sustainable development.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

MBTA GLX Program Manager John Dalton and Deputy Program Manager Terry McCarthy introduced themselves and gave an overview of what might be expected from the group. That the group would function as a way to assist in getting information out to and get feedback from the community. The plan would be to meet once a month at locations across the three GLX communities in Cambridge, Somerville, and Medford. It was said that the group could meet during the day or in the evenings to be determined by the group for what works best.

#### **PRESENTATION:**

The presentation discussed the procurement process for the selected GLX Design Build (DB) team, explained the DB method and its benefits for the project, and reviewed the Additive Options that the DB team was able to include as part of its contact bid.

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION/ISSUES RAISED BY CWG MEMBERS:**

There was discussion on how quality assurance would be done, how the project would prevent a situation where funding ran out after the construction had started, and how to prevent the contractor from cutting corners or installing sub-standard work that would deliver a project that was less than promised. The GLX team stated that quality assurance was the responsibility of the contractor but that MBTA would have oversight of their plans and would need to accept the plans. There are also performance requirements to keep the contractor to the MBTA's set specifications. Oversight of the DB's work would be a multi-layered process with Resident Engineers, inspectors and the MBTA Quality Assurance/Quality Control Department engaged with every aspect of the project from design to construction. It was also noted that during the project the CWG should bring issues up if they too see quality issues that they think should be addressed.

A concern was raised that there would be less exchange with the community on the design of the project than there had been with the project previously and how much problem solving the CWG would be able to accomplish. Issues of particular concern were about light and sound mitigation. The GLX team said that the CWG should identify design areas of sensitivity on the project and then let the contractor hear them (representatives from the DB team will be invited to future meetings). Though the MBTA can not demand changes beyond the performance specification commitments laid out in the contract, the DB could still make reasonable changes as long as they did not affect cost/duration of project.

It was asked if the GLX specifications had been made public. The GLX team said that they had not yet been made public but would be once any potential information that could have security implications had been removed or redacted.

A question was raised if there should be any concern delay on the Notice to Proceed (NTP) which had not been issued on December 11 as had been anticipated. The GLX team said that it should not be a concern and it was just that they were currently reviewing contract information (bonding, insurance, etc.) to sure everything was in place before the NTP which was expected to be issued soon.

It was brought up that it was concerning how the MBTA had only a small number of MBTA staff on the project in the previous iteration, and it was asked if the MBTA could reassure that they have the staff, experience and support to take on and supervise this large project. The GLX team stated that they are now set up at 200 Inner Belt Rd in Somerville and that the DB has already started setting up there as well. The office currently has 60 full time equivalent employees and once the project is fully going they expect to have around 85.

During the presentation it was noted that the DB procurement process allowed for discussions where certain risks were able to be mitigated. Asked to expand on an example of these risks, the GLX team noted that the number of railway flaggers that had been committed to the project was seen by the contractors to be too low and that getting a higher number would help the contractor to better mitigate that risk. Subsequently, the number was increased.

There was discussion on if there was a concern that money for the project could run out half way through and the project only be partially built or if there was any concern that the federal money would not be provided. The GLX team said they were not worried about the funding because the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) was a contract with the federal government

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for their portion of funding for the project and that was binding. The DB also has a contract which includes a timeframe, a set amount and what they are to deliver.

In the discussion about the additive options a question came up about who was being engaged for the art. GLX team said they were engaging with the artists who had previously been selected to provide art for the GLX. This included local artists.

It was asked if the MBTA had done any analysis on if the new Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) will have any effect on the capacity for the Green Line which has seen overcrowding issues. The GLX team said it did not have any data to share but that the VMF would assist in getting cars to College Ave and Union Square sooner and that it would also assist in the upkeep of the cars which will all help in providing in a more consistent and reliable service which in turn effects capacity.

An issue was raised from a member who abuts the current GLX early works construction about how mitigation, communication and transparency should all be improved as the project moves forward.

There was concern about how many trains would be at College Ave station before the beginning of train service each day and the effect this would have on neighbors. The GLX team said they could not talk directly about how operations would occur day to day on the GLX but that they would have the appropriate people of the MBTA who could address the questions at a future meeting.

There was a question about who on the project abutters of the railway should contact if they had any access issues concerning the rail corridor during construction. The GLX team said that Terry McCarthy or Marty Nee should be contacted on the project and that their contact info would be sent to the members. It was also stated that the team would be confirming the CWG members contact information to form a contact list for the CWG to be distributed to all members.

Terry McCarthy said that he would be serving as the CWG co-chair on behalf of the MBTA and that at the next meeting the CWG would be asked to select the community co-chair. He said that the team would also try to get the agendas for the meetings out a week in advance so that CWG members could give suggestions or add topics. The meetings would try to be held to 1 to 1.5 hours.

There was also discussion raised from a non-CWG member of the public in attendance whether there would be time set aside at the meetings for public comment. The GLX team said the hope with the group was that comments from the community would be funneled through their representatives in group but that it was up to the CWG to decide how they want to best use their time at these meetings.