

Comm. Ave. Green Line Improvements Public Meeting
October 23, 2014, Boston Public Library, 6:00-8:00
Audience Questions & Issues

Approximately 60 members of the public attended the meeting.

Elected officials co-hosting:

Senators Will Brownsberger (D-Belmont) and Cynthia Stone Creem (D-Newton);
Representatives Kevin Honan (D-Brighton), Michael Moran (D-Brighton), and Frank
Smizik (D-Brookline); and Boston City Councilor Mark Ciommo (District 9).

MBTA & MassDOT Participants:

Donny Dailey, Legislative Liaison, MassDOT
Curt Nikitas, Project Manager, MassDOT
Ed Hunter, Assistant General Manager for Design and Construction, MBTA
Erik Stoothoff, Chief Engineer, MBTA
William McClellan, Director, Light Rail Operations
Melissa Dullea, Director, Planning and Scheduling
Steven Culp, Deputy Director, System Safety
Randy Clarke, Director, Security and Initiatives
Robert Sampson, Systemwide Accessibility
Jack O'Neill, Project Manager, Jacobs Engineering

Highlights of audience feedback:

1. Implementation of Signal Priority should be a focus of service improvements
2. All-door boarding desired
3. Advance pay and Charlie Card recharge desired
4. Coordinate with City of Boston (COB) on streetscape project
5. Work to integrate bikers, pedestrians, trains, and cars

Highlights from MBTA responses:

1. Accessibility & code compliance are priorities
2. Must work within space constraints
3. Design and constructability face funding constraints
4. Coordinate with City of Boston (COB) on streetscape project
5. Only at 10% design now, 30% by end of 2014, will have more info at 60%

Questions & issues raised by audience:

(The comments of the first 3 speakers were missed before taking notes.)

1. **Speaker 4.**
 - a. No change in plans to bus #57.
2. **Speaker 5. Allston "Boarderland" woman**
 - a. No regard to permanent, long-term residents. Universities have built without proper zoning oversight. College students have taken over.

- b. Why not close Blandford? Answer: Use for unloading customers and turnarounds, vital to operations.
 - c. Why keep BU East and Central stops? Answer: Stops are already accessible.
 - d. Need room for bikers.
- 3. Speaker 6. Jim Franco**
- a. BU West and BU Bridge issues and traffic during construction.
 - b. Station on a grade? Answer: All ramps designed at not more than 5%.
 - c. What happens during construction? Answer: Stations stay. On constructability, will know more about nights, weekends, and coordination with BU Bridge at 60% design.
 - d. Need to compromise on sidewalk width for biking space?
- 4. Speaker 7. Glen Berkowitz, Livable Streets Alliance**
- a. Thank you for the presentation.
 - b. Asks when rebuilding Comm. Ave. to use a complete street principal including bikes, parked cars, moving cars, trolleys. Cyclist tracks may not be the best solution.
 - c. Work with COB to combine and sequence projects. There is an opportunity to find the needed space and avoid a “debate about the inches.”
 - d. Suggests getting some working groups together for some blue sky thinking.
 - e. Add a mid-block crosswalk at Alcorn St. and Naples Rd.
 - f. (Note: See Livable Streets website on alternate vision for Comm. Ave.: <http://www.livablestreets.info/creating-alternate-vision-comm-ave>)
- 5. Speaker 8.**
- a. Supports the project in general. Stresses need to accommodate bike lanes, all-door boarding, and signal priority.
- 6. Speaker 9. Charlie Denison, Livable Streets Alliance**
- a. Signal priority a must.
- 7. Speaker 10. Scott Englander, Brookline Transportation Board member**
- a. Reiterates, Charlie Card charging locations, all-door loading.
 - b. Eliminate St. Paul name – there are two in the system.
 - c. Mobile lifts technology.
- 8. Speaker 11.**
- a. Suggests consolidate to 1 station rather than 2. Answer: Additional walk time does not offset travel time and customer experience.
 - b. Would like center platform. Answer: More money and not enough space.
- 9. Speaker 12.**
- a. What is the reduction in the total ride time? What is the cost benefit of achieving reduced travel time? Answer: 1 minute. The minutes add up across all customers to achieve greater overall customer satisfaction.
 - b. As a cyclist he can travel much more quickly.
- 10. Speaker 13. BU student from Allston**
- a. Consolidation is a great idea, sees no inconvenience with just 2 stops.
 - b. Echoes need for 1) all-door boarding, 2) bike lanes, 3) signal prioritization.
 - c. Put fare machines along Green Line.

11. Speaker 14. Brad Johnson

- a. How is the right of way space used? Answer: Grassy area such as Huntington Ave. can be a maintenance issue. Trees can be a problem with leaves on the tracks; they do not help with noise.
- b. Work with the COB on use of the space.

12. Speaker 15. Jonathan works downtown & cycles

- a. Not everyone likes cyclist tracks.
- b. Fare categories and structure. Rapid transit versus bus fare, what is equitable for Green Line service?

13. Speaker 16.

- a. Are express trains possible - there is too much stop time? Answer: No.
- b. Do not like holding of trains. Answer: Try not to do this for more than 1-2 minutes. Will look into where trains are being held too often and for too long.

14. Speaker 17.

- a. Fleet types, will Type 7 cars become Type 8 cars? Answer: Type 7 cars are the most reliable. Type 10 cars will replace Type 7 cars over the next 10-15 years. All will be low floor cars.

15. Speaker 18.

- a. Seat configuration, mention of the pros and cons of front and rear facing.

16. Speaker 19.

- a. Issue with bunching. Can you run 1-car versus 3-car trains? Answer: A train runs through Copley every 30 seconds, no benefit to 1-car. Try to maintain 5-minute headways.

17. Speaker 20.

- a. Plan for mediums. Answer: Huntington green space was a problem. Better to use gravel and no trees. Make the space for the T and wider sidewalks the priority. Transit 1st, roads 2nd.

18. Speaker 21. John Laddt, Mayor's office

- a. Will take back concerns to the Mayor's office. There will be a Phase 2A public meeting.

19. Speaker 22. Marc Ebuna, Transit Matters blogger

- a. Need for TSP – Transit Signal Priority.

20. Speaker 23. Matthew Danish

- a. Good to have real-time train location data go into use for the Green Line.
- b. Commonwealth Avenue should be pedestrian friendly.
- c. Reconsider Phase 2A to change Comm. Ave. from “the auto mile to the people mile.”
- d. Comm. Ave. should be a transit mall where cars are guests. Glen Berkowitz of Livable Streets Alliance is doing good work with COB.