

SUMMARY OF LIVABLE STREETS ALLIANCE COMMENTS

From: Jeffrey L. Rosenblum, P.E. – Executive Director, LivableStreets Alliance
Date: May 30, 2006
Subject: Boston – Massachusetts Avenue Reconstruction Project

- Summary - Livable Streets requests wider sidewalks in addition to a 5' bike lane. They feel this can be accomplished by eliminating the median entirely while also eliminating on-street parking on one side of Massachusetts Avenue at the intersections (where 10' left turn lanes are required).

Wider sidewalks and a bike lane cannot be provided without narrowing or eliminating some other element in the cross section. It appears that a 4' bike lane could be provided if 10.5' travel lanes were used on the project. A 4' bike lane may not be acceptable to Livable Streets (they desire 5' since the bike lane is adjacent to on-street parking). The 10.5' travel lanes would vary from the MHD approved Design Exception Report.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests the elimination of the median.

The neighborhood task force will not tolerate the elimination of the median. Raised median planters are provided for a portion of the project and will be maintained by BUMC (pending maintenance agreement). Elimination of the median does not seem entirely valuable since the median essentially 'shadows' the left turn lanes provided at the intersections.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests coordination with Save the Harbor/ Save the Bay so that Mass. Ave. may be considered as part of a developing network of bicycle routes.

GPI will coordinate with MHD/FHWA/City to see if the cross section can be reworked to provide a bike lane.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests 10' parking areas in the vicinity of bus stops.

GPI cannot provide more than 8' parking areas unless sidewalk or travel lane widths are reduced.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests bus bays to be 20' longer since they are located adjacent to bulb-outs.

GPI has made bus bays 80' long when located adjacent to bump outs.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests modification to the Albany Street intersection cross section to accommodate bicyclists.

GPI cannot modify this section since we are matching the existing cross section at the project limit.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests short cycle length at pedestrian crossing at Orange Line crossing.

GPI is proposing a 100 second cycle length at this location to provide vehicle progression along the corridor. If a half cycle was provided at this location, vehicle queuing would be very problematic especially southbound resulting in grid lock at St. Botolph Street and potentially up to Huntington Avenue and beyond.

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- Summary – Livable Streets requests a wider crossing at the Orange Line pedestrian crossing.

GPI has provided a wider crosswalk (15'), ramps (9') and median opening (15') at the Orange Line crossing.

- Summary – Livable Streets wants to eliminate the median between Columbus and St. Botolph.

The median is narrow and is not intended for pedestrian refuge. It is provided to divide opposing traffic and prevent midblock u-turns.

- Summary – Livable Streets wants to provide crossing exclusively for the Southwest Corridor Park.

GPI will meet with Livable Street to determine if this is feasible.

- Summary – Livable Streets wants to provide level sidewalks (i.e. driveway aprons) across low volume roads such as Parmalee Street. Also use concrete sidewalks with brick accent strip.

Level sidewalks cannot be utilized for curbed roadways such as Parmalee Street. This could have significant impact to roadway drainage. South End Landmark District requires brick sidewalks.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests two handicap ramps at each corner aligned with crosswalks. They would also like improved alignment of crosswalks with the desire-line of pedestrians.

Apex type curb ramps are utilized since there are site constraints which preclude the use of individual curb ramps. The apex type curb ramps provide a better accommodation of the desire-line of pedestrians than individual crosswalks.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests that the design speed limit for the project be reduced to 25 mph.

The speed limit for the project is 30 mph as is consistent with the Streetscape Guidelines.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests that bicycle racks be provided throughout the project.

Bicycle racks have been provided at St. Botolph Street and the Orange Line Station as requested.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests that public art be provided in the project.

This is beyond the original scope of this project.

- Summary – Livable Streets requests that wayfinding signage be included in the project.

This is beyond the original scope of this project.