

6 September 2007

Mr. Gerald Autler
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Autler:

LivableStreets appreciates the opportunity to comment on the **Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) for Harvard's proposed Science Complex in Allston**. The Science Complex is the first phase of the long-term development of Harvard's Allston campus and it is, therefore, important that the design of the transportation system and the public realm serve as a model for what is to come. Though preliminary information regarding transportation and the public realm has been provided to the public by Harvard University, details are lacking and are too vague to make a reasonable determination at this stage. This project, involving about 200 acres, is too important to allow important details to go un-reviewed prior to approval. **We therefore urge you not to grant final approval to either the Campus Master Plan or the Science Complex until additional details are provided to the BRA and the public.**

It is crucial that this development project reduce dependence on single-occupancy motor vehicle trips in the area, with goal of creating a campus that is both pedestrian and bicycle-friendly and one that is well-served by public transit. In addition, the Science Complex development, and the entire Harvard Allston Development, should create quality public spaces in a rich urban environment, one that engages the public and those who live in the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as those who study and work at Harvard.

Various documents submitted by Harvard to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) regarding transportation and public spaces have supported improved access to the Harvard Allston campus by various modes and to mitigate the impacts of the project by improving the public realm. LivableStreets Alliance agrees with the overall goals stated in the 2007 Executive Summary of the Plan for Harvard in Allston. Harvard is touting this as

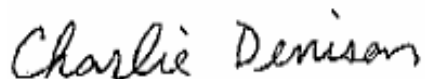
a premier sustainable project— while there is enormous depth to the details of building design, the transportation planning is conventional at best. A comprehensive sustainable transportation plan is needed to mitigate the negative environmental impacts of this development. At various meetings, the BRA has indicated that it has alternative concepts and plans to what has been presented by Harvard. LivableStreets Alliance urges you to share these ideas with the public prior to making a determination on the Campus Master Plan. In addition, the 25-year Master Plan neglects to provide phasing details that would allow the public to fully grasp the impact, over time, of this development.

The Master Plan does not provide adequate details regarding a transportation master plan, in the following categories: (1) A transportation plan for the future of transit in the area (including bus, rapid transit, commuter rail) with clear strategy for connecting to regional transit initiatives; (2) a detailed bicycling master plan, pedestrian master plan, and discussion of the relationship between bicyclists and pedestrians; (3) streetscape design standards (including bicycle and pedestrian accommodation, paving materials, improved accessibility through Universal Design concepts, intersection design, signal timing, landscaping, vehicle design speed, traffic calming measures); connectivity to greenspace and openspace (e.g., Charles River paths). Phase One will significantly impact the remaining development. Designs for the much of the above for Phase One will set the tone and direction of future development. Academic Way is a critical piece of an off-road network, yet connectivity details are yet to be developed.

It would be shortsighted to move forward with such a large development without having a broader transportation and public space plan; otherwise the development will preclude options and better decisions in the future. The future of environmental protection includes the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle trips. This can only be accomplished by developing a comprehensive transportation plan and attending diligently to the public realm, including the development of quality public spaces as it pertains to creating a dynamic urban environment, to maximize its use by pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users and minimize dependency on the motor vehicle.

Please feel free to contact us to discuss any of our comments in greater detail at 617-939-3824 or jeff@livablestreets.info.

Sincerely,



Charles Denison
Board of Directors
LivableStreets Alliance



Jeffrey L. Rosenblum, PE
Executive Director
LivableStreets Alliance