

July 14, 2009

Commissioner Rick Sullivan  
Department of Conservation and Recreation  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600  
Boston MA 02114

Delivery by Adobe PDF via email to rick.sullivan@state.ma.us

**Subject: Jamaica Pond Pedestrian Access Enhancements**

Dear Commissioner Sullivan:

We would like to take this opportunity to provide some suggestions and comments regarding the Jamaica Pond Pedestrian Access Enhancements Project, as presented to the community on Wednesday July 1, 2009.

We are excited to learn that pedestrian access to Jamaica Pond is being improved. Jamaica Pond is one of the jewels of Boston, yet in some ways can be difficult to get to on foot due to lack of safe crossings of the parkways around it. These improvements will undoubtedly make access to the pond safer and more convenient.

The consultants have proposed two alternatives for all three locations (Jamaicaway at Eliot Street, Parkman Drive at Kelley Circle, and Parkman Drive near Parkman Memorial). Either one of these alternatives for each of these locations is a marked improvement. However, in our opinion, one alternative stands out for each location:

**Jamaicaway at Eliot Street -- Our choice: Option 2**

As noted with the “pros” in the presentation, the crosswalk lands in a more desirable location on the pond side. With Option 1, pedestrians cross at a rather awkward location near the fork in the paths. Option 2 has pedestrians land in a place where travel in any direction on the path is convenient. In addition, locating the crosswalk at the new curb extension on the neighborhood side should make pedestrians more visible than on the sidewalk at the other side of the intersection.

An idea for having two crosswalks has been mentioned to us. They would both start at the same point along the path (as proposed in Option 2), but would then fan out to reach both corners of Eliot Street. In our opinion, this is even better than Option 2 as currently proposed.

**Parkman Drive at Kelley Circle – Our choice: Option 2**

The two-lane cross-section of Option 2 around the top of Kelly Circle will have more of a traffic calming effect than the three-lane cross-section in Option 1. The tightened intersection with Parkman Drive will make pedestrians more visible and further slow traffic turning into and out of Parkman Drive far more than leaving the curbs as they are now (and which remain in Option 1).

**Parkman Drive near Parkman Memorial – Our choice: Option 1**

In this case, we prefer Option 1 because it provides a direct route for pedestrians, meeting the existing desire line for crossing Parkman Drive where the walkway meets it on the west side. Although the geometry of the crossing in Option 2 is better, the fact that it takes pedestrians out of their way is worrisome. Our experience shows that pedestrians will usually follow the shortest path to where they are going, whether or not there is a safe crossing or formal walkway there. For example, pedestrians coming along the walkway past the Memorial will probably cut across the grassy hill to meet up with the new crossing instead of following the indirect route of the extended walkway.

In Option 2, if the pathway past the Memorial leading to Parkman Drive can be rerouted in a more direct manner to meet up with the proposed crossing, we would definitely support Option 2 as the better of the two. More data about the origins and destinations of pedestrians who cross Parkman Drive may be needed to determine which of the two crossing locations best serve their needs.

Thank you for considering our input as this project moves forward. If you have any questions on the above comments and suggestions, please contact Charlie Denison, Board Member & Advocacy Director, LivableStreets Alliance, who may be reached at 617.852.6125 and [charlie@livablestreets.info](mailto:charlie@livablestreets.info).

Sincerely,



Charlie Denison,  
Board Member & Advocacy Director

CC: Jack Murray, DCR  
Stephanie Boundy, DCR  
Conrad Crawford, DCR