

**Emerald Necklace Bicycle and Pedestrian Crossings Committee Meeting  
Town Hall, Room 111  
Monday, October 3, 2011, 6 p.m.**

**Committee Members Present:** Jesse Mermell (Chair), Clara Batchelor, Kate Bowditch, Julie Crockford, Rob Daves, Guus Driessen, Linda Hamlin, Arlene Mattison, Tommy Vitolo

**Committee Members Absent:** Kathe Geist, Patrice Kish

**Staff Present:** Erin Chute Gallentine, Peter Ditto, Rob Kefalas, Jeff Levine, Joe Viola, Heather Charles Lis

**Guests Present:** see attached

**Welcome/Call Meeting to Order**

J. Mermell called the meeting to order, briefly introduced the project, and thanked everyone for participating.

**Introduction of Committee Members, Staff, and Design Team**

Committee members, staff, and the design team introduced themselves. The Committee members and affiliations are as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Jesse Mermell	Board of Selectmen
Clara Batchelor	Park and Recreation Commission
Kate Bowditch	Conservation Commission
Julie Crockford	Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Rob Daves	High Street Hill Association
Guus Driessen	Transportation Board
Kathe Geist	Netherlands Road Neighborhood Association
Linda Hamlin	Planning Board
Patrice Kish	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Arlene Mattison	Brookline GreenSpace Alliance
Tommy Vitolo	Bicycle Advisory Committee/Brookline Bikes

**Review Scope of Project**

E. Gallentine, Parks and Open Space Director, briefly reviewed the scope of the project, which includes designing improved crossings at five locations in the Emerald Necklace and pedestrian and bicycle connections. She explained that funding will come from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, a grant from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and approximately \$600,000 in the Federal Transportation Bond Bill. The project will include designs for a buildable Riverway/Olmsted Park connection at Washington St. and conceptual designs for the other crossings and connections. The Transportation Bond Bill funding is intended for construction of the recommended crossing at Washington St./Rt. 9. E. Gallentine briefly explained the maps showing the project area. She said the Town had put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for design services, and has hired GPI/Alta/Pressley Associates. Several committee members asked for clarification on the project funding and scope. E. Gallentine and J. Levine, Planning and Community Development Director, provided more detail, and J. Levine explained that money is earmarked in the Transportation Bond Bill, but it has

recently expired and must be renewed, and crossings along the Riverway must be approved by the state Department of Transportation.

### **Design Team Discusses Project Approach and Schedule**

The design team includes John Diaz (GPI Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.), Phil Goff (Project Manager from Alta), Becky Williamson (Project Manager from GPI), and Marion Pressley (Pressley Associates, not present at meeting). J. Diaz provided additional information on the background and expertise of the design team. He explained the project approach and schedule, including doing design work for all crossings, but focusing on the Washington St./Rt. 9 crossing first and creating construction documents for this crossing. He discussed existing conditions and options for bikes and pedestrians, and connecting this project to the Gateway East project and to Boston. E. Gallentine said she is in contact with transportation staff in Boston.

### **Discuss Goals for Committee**

E. Gallentine and J. Mermell discussed the goals and charge for the committee.

### **Committee Discussion**

- J. Crockford asked about the length of the process and the anticipated meetings. J. Diaz discussed a potential meeting strategy.
- R. Daves asked about the plans so far. J. Diaz and P. Goff responded that they were just getting started, but they reviewed examples of solutions and ideas from other projects. T. Vitolo provided some additional input on how bicycles access and use the area.
- K. Bowditch asked about participating and providing feedback outside of meetings when appropriate, and E. Gallentine said any communication from committee members and the public outside meetings should go through R. Kefalas, who will share with the consultants.
- J. Mermell said she would like to hear from staff on official requirement for the crossings, and J. Levine discussed the Gateway East project to date, coordinating the funding for this project, and distributing information to committee members.
- R. Daves asked about using the Boston side for the designs, and E. Gallentine explained that designs will be for Brookline, but Boston will be kept in the loop as the project progresses.
- G. Driessen asked about ownership in the project area, and J. Diaz explained the various owners and stakeholders including Brookline, Boston, DCR, MassDOT.
- L. Hamlin discussed the Gateway East committee process and the importance of avoiding schemes and solutions that are not realistic for the crossings. A. Mattison asked about plans from this process, and J. Viola explained the ideas but lack of solid designs at this point.
- K. Bowditch reminded everyone that the project will likely be reviewed by the Conservation Commission, and that this area is discussed in the recent Open Space Plan with goals related to stormwater management, pollution prevention, managing impervious cover, and addressing erosion problems. She asked that these issues be considered early in the process.

### **Conclusion**

J. Mermell, E. Gallentine, J. Diaz and others discussed the public process and the next steps, and concluded that the next meeting would provide an opportunity to provide feedback and input on the crossings and the current issues and opportunities. J. Mermell said the committee would provide their input at the beginning of the meeting, and the public would provide input following this. Members of the public will be encouraged to submit comments in writing and will have a

limited time in which to speak. After this meeting, the consultants will present their ideas and solutions at the following meeting. E. Gallentine asked if there are plans for additional bike counts, and T. Vitolo said he has recent bikes counts from last month to provide. Committee members and staff agreed to the following future meeting dates:

**Thursday, November 3, 2011, 7-9 p.m.**

**Wednesday, January 4, 2012, 6 p.m.**

**Tentatively every first Wednesday after that as needed.**

### **Adjournment**

J. Mermell adjourned the meeting.

### Documents Used at the Meeting:

- Meeting agenda
- Committee and staff list
- Project description, prepared by E. Gallentine and J. Mermell
- Charge of committee, prepared by E. Gallentine and J. Mermell
- Emerald Necklace Bicycle & Pedestrian Crossing, Map of Crossings, 10/3/11
- Emerald Necklace Crossing Map, 10/3/11
- Presentation prepared by GPI, 10/3/11

Submitted by H. Lis.