



May 31, 2011

To: William Clark
Director of Planning & Community Development
Town of Milton

Through: Keri Pyke, P.E., PTOE
Howard/Stein-Hudson
Project Manager

From: Nathaniel Curtis
Howard/Stein-Hudson
Public Involvement Specialist

RE: **East Milton Square Parking and Access Study
3rd Community Meeting¹
Meeting Notes of May 18, 2011**

William (Bill) Clark (Director of Planning & Community Development for the Town of Milton) opened the third and final community meeting of the East Milton Square Parking and Access Study by welcoming the members of the audience and thanking them for their attendance. He explained that much of the work for the study has been done by the Business and Citizens' Advisory Committee or BCAC. The BCAC is a body of 15 members, constituted by the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of working through the detail of the study. Many of the members of the BCAC are East Milton residents or own a business in the Square. Assisting the BCAC in its work has been Howard/Stein-Hudson (HSH), which has provided the planning expertise for the committee and overseen the public involvement process associated with the study. The scope of work that has been followed by HSH was developed by the Town with input from the Board of Selectmen. During the study process, HSH has met with the BCAC approximately once a month to develop a plan for short-, mid-, and long-term improvements for the Square. The result of the BCAC's work with HSH is a report that will be issued to the Board of Selectmen in June 2011. It is incumbent on the Board of Selectmen to approve the report, and none of the recommendations in it will move forward without the Board's approval. This report addresses issues including parking, improving the flow of traffic through East Milton Square, potential zoning changes to the Square's business district, and improving cut-through traffic issues in the residential areas around the Square.²

In looking at how to provide additional parking, the BCAC has brainstormed a variety of potential solutions. Among these was the acquisition of properties around the Square to provide land for parking. At this time, the idea of acquiring property has been dismissed by the BCAC and is not recommended in the final report to be issued to the Selectmen. Such an acquisition does not align with the evaluation criteria developed by the BCAC and is not supported by the Selectmen, the project team, or MassDOT. It is also worth noting that the money remaining to the Town to carry out the steps laid out in the final report is not sufficient to acquire any of the properties analyzed by the committee. Readers of these minutes should understand that the Town categorically will not acquire property to create parking. The final report to be issued to the Selectmen does contain the following recommendations:

- Short-term (0-12 months): wayfinding and parking management including enforcement of existing regulations, introduction of new/consistent signage for parking and wayfinding, and standardization of the times during which parking regulations are in force.
- Intermediate-term (0-24 months): Implementation of the Hybrid Plan or Alternative 1B which would repurpose some of the I-93 deck to provide two parking lots bisected by a landscaped pathway.
- Long-term (18 months at the soonest): changes to zoning in the business district, specifically on the segment of Bassett Street between Granite Avenue and Franklin Street, and on Mechanic Street to more closely align with the Square's existing conditions. Under this part of the BCAC's recommendations, the segment of Bassett Street would be rezoned from residential to commercial to match the areas around it, such as the house on Adams Court

¹ Meeting attendance sheets are reproduced in Appendix 1.

² While addressing cut-through traffic is not part of the scope for the study, the project team and BCAC have offered a list of potential traffic calming options for the neighborhoods around the Square and are only offering redesign options which improve the flow of traffic on the area's main roads to help pull traffic away from residential areas.

which is already in a commercial zone, and to provide a connection between the Milton Marketplace and Adams Street, two recognized business hubs in the Square. Mechanic Street would be given a mixed-use zoning overlay, similar to the planned unit development (PUD) areas in Milton Village or on Central Avenue. The overlay would not abolish the existing residential zoning, but would allow professional offices, such as lawyers, doctors, dentists, or insurance agents, to establish businesses in the first floor of buildings along Mechanic Street while maintaining residences above. The large house lots on Mechanic Street would allow off-street parking. Any homeowner seeking to keep their property fully residential would be allowed to do so.

Highlights of the Presentation³

Following his opening remarks, Bill turned the meeting over to Keri Pyke (HSH) who briefed the audience on the current status of the project with a short PowerPoint presentation. This presentation, as well as previous presentations and minutes associated with BCAC and community meetings can be seen on www.eastmiltonsquarestudy.com/documents.html. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Among the short-term steps recommended by the project team and BCAC are changes in curbside management. Proposed changes from existing conditions include:
 - Changing the service zone parking west of the post office on Adams Street to public parking. This would introduce another 12 spaces to the public parking supply.
 - Creating five new service zone parking spaces on Bryant Avenue south of State Street.
 - Allowing parking on the south side of Adams Street and the north side of Boulevard Street where they cross I-93 to introduce 8 new public parking spaces to the supply.
- The changes outlined above will be accompanied by new, consistent signage displaying parking regulations. These regulations will need to be enforced; by issuing parking tickets if required. The enforcement of parking regulations will also help boost parking turnover. Steady parking turnover is broadly considered to be beneficial to local businesses.
- The recommended step in the intermediate-term is the implementation of the Hybrid Plan. This option combines elements of the early 1990's East Milton Square Revitalization Plan with a plan developed by BCAC member Kurt Fraser to provide a plan which:
 - Closes the segment of Adams Street over I-93.
 - Maintains the eastbound slip lane from Adams Street to Granite Avenue.
 - Provides a mix of parking, approximately 50 new spaces, and landscaped pathway on the deck over I-93.
 - Splits the long crosswalk on Adams Street at the post office into two, shorter and safer segments.
 - Moves the crosswalk on Granite Avenue at the Bruegger's Bagels to the south to put it in a safer location.
- There are a number of elements of this plan which will need further design and community process. These include:
 - Finalizing the correct balance of green space and parking on the I-93 deck.
 - Determining the appropriate landscaping treatments to soften the edges of the two parking lots.
 - Determining how to stage construction to minimize impacts on local businesses.
 - Placement of the various monuments currently on the I-93 deck.
 - Whether or not a connection between the two proposed parking lots is appropriate.
 - Whether turning Edge Hill Road and Boulevard Street into a one-way pair is feasible when combined with changes to Governors Road currently under discussion by the Town's traffic committee.
- Long-term recommendations include:
 - Changing the zoning on Bassett Street between Granite Avenue and Franklin Street from residential to commercial.
 - Placing the mixed-use zoning overlay on Mechanic Street.
 - Studying the impact of changing the ramp at Exit 11 to allow traffic from I-93 to travel south on Granite Avenue to access Quincy via Squantum Street. The BCAC believes that this will relieve some the pressure on Exit 10 which delivers a steady stream to traffic to Granite Avenue below the Square throughout the day.

³ Much of the presentation consisted of graphics and users may find it helpful to have these at hand when reading these minutes. The presentation can be downloaded at: <http://www.eastmiltonsquarestudy.com/documents.html>

- Studying the possibility of narrowing Granite Avenue north of the Square from four lanes down to two and repurposing the reclaimed right-of-way for a cycle track or mixed-use pathway to improve bicycle/pedestrian connections between the Square and Neponset River Greenway.
- The project team and BCAC are aware that cut-through traffic is an issue in the residential neighborhoods surrounding the Square. Speed data obtained by the Town shows that traffic is moving at 75 miles per hour on some residential roads. Streets brought to the attention of the BCAC through the public involvement process include, but are not limited to, Granite Place, Governors Road, and Belcher Circle. Recommended elements to address traffic calming include:
 - Addressing cut-through traffic in the neighborhoods around the Square holistically to avoid pushing traffic from one residential street to another.
 - Re-timing signals on the main roads in the Square to improve traffic flow. This would pull traffic out of residential areas and back to where it belongs.
 - Implementing some or all of the following traffic calming elements on residential streets surrounding the Square:
 - Curb extensions or bump-outs.
 - Speed humps – a wider version of a speed bump.
 - Raised crosswalks – the crosswalk is raised to the level of the sidewalk. Textured and colored pavement can be used to prompt motorists to reduce speed, while lighting can be used to indicate when a pedestrian enters the crosswalk. Typically, these devices force drivers to slow to between 10 and 15 mph.
 - Raised intersections – also known as tabled intersections, these traffic calming options bring the whole intersection up to the level of the sidewalk. This forces vehicles to slow while entering and exiting the intersection in order to climb on to and off of the tabled section.
 - Chicanes – a horizontal feature which moves the road back and forth to force drivers to drive more slowly. An example of a local chicane is on Columbia Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts. One of the more famous chicanes is Lombard Street in San Francisco.

Question & Answer Session

Bill kicked off the discussion by noting that the study regarding the feasibility of the proposed change to I-93 Exit 11 has been placed in the long-term timeframe because it has regional implications and would include involvement on the state level from MassDOT and on the federal level from FHWA. After the completion of the study, implementation would take place through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Making changes to Exit 11 would be a 7-10 year process. Looking more locally, the proposed Hybrid Alternative would include a landscaped pedestrian walkway between the two parking lots, retimed traffic signals to smooth the flow of traffic, and amenities for bicycles and pedestrians. Funding for continued design and implementation includes \$850,000 still available from the earmark that funded the Parking and Access Study, and a second \$800,000 federal earmark. To access this second \$800,000, the Town must contribute \$200,000. Bill concluded his remarks by reminding the audience that no properties would be acquired in the implementation of any of the steps recommended by the BCAC to the Board of Selectmen.

C: Diana Wong (DW): I brought my two kids to this meeting; they are sitting quietly in the back. I live on Grafton Street and my primary concern is the speed and volume of cut-through traffic on my street during the day and late afternoon. I have difficulty leaving my street right now due to vehicles backing up from a nearby traffic light on Edge Hill Road. On Edge Hill Road, there are frequently cars parked which forces traffic into a single lane. This creates congestion and people use Grafton Street as a cut-through. The cut-through traffic speeds are high and I'm worried about letting my kids play outside.

A: Bill Clark (BC): On June 1st, there will be a meeting of the traffic commission to specifically address cut-through traffic in your area. Primarily, this study was supposed to address issues of parking in the Square and access to the Square, but none of the plans you see here tonight will worsen cut-through traffic. We are aware of the issue and know we need to keep our eye on it.

C: John Cronin (JC): [Mr. Cronin read from a prepared statement. This statement is included as Appendix 2.]

- C: Joseph Curran (JCu): On the slide that addresses existing curbside use, there is an error. I was here before at your meeting in March and told you about it. I told you I would come back to check on it.
- A: BC: All of the parking signs will be redone as an early step in this process. There is a mismatch of parking signs out there currently. Some of them don't even have writing any more. Near the post office, there's a sign that doesn't say anything. The parking near State Street is currently one hour parking, but it doesn't attract that many people so we want to change it and give it the right signage so that we can use it to the best advantage.
- C: JCu: But I'm not talking about future changes, I'm talking about the existing slide. There's an error on it.
- A: BC: And that's fine. What I'm telling you is that the existing conditions are going to change to what you see on the parking management slide.
- C: JCu: Thank you, I appreciate it. I just wanted to bring it up again since I mentioned it at the last meeting. I also wanted to mention some things about the Hybrid Plan: there's a crosswalk on Granite Avenue, but you're not showing it. For years, I've been coming to traffic commission meetings and meetings of the Board of Selectmen, since the deck and complaining that when you press the button for the walk light and Bryant Avenue/Boulevard Street, nothing happens. The button at the post office works. There must be some sort of timing issue by whoever instituted the design.
- A: Keri Pyke (KP): We did the field work and when we were trying to cross some of the streets we saw that some of them didn't work. Are you saying that none of the pedestrian buttons work?
- C: JCu: When you get down to Granite Avenue, where it's one-way northbound, there is a time when you don't have to wait for the traffic: if the light for Adams Street is green you can cross – if you were familiar with the area you would know that – but on Bryant Avenue the traffic is from all directions and you can't cross. All the lights around the highway seem to be tied to together somehow with coordination between them.
- A: KP: We looked in the signal cabinets during our review of existing conditions, and I don't recall noting that the buttons and pedestrian phase had been disabled.
- C: JCu: They work, but there seems to be some sort of tracking where it happens too late.
- A: KP: After the heaviest traffic movement the light will change depending on the phase. This is easier on a one-way street, since there are fewer possible movements.
- C: JCu: I also want to focus on the commercial overlay slide. There's one business on Bryant Avenue, it's a law office, and there are some businesses on Boulevard Street and Martin Terrace. The brick building over there is a little newer, but I believe it's a commercial zone over there.
- A: BC: Those are preexisting, non-conforming uses; they were grandfathered in when the zoning was done.
- C: JCu: Before the brick building was there, it was the Duggan family house and that was torn down to make way for the brick building.
- A: BC: The zoning line is there. The Shell Station used to be First National, so there's no parking there. People have to use the on street spaces. The Baptist church is a pre-existing, non-conforming use. The planning board needs to look at that not this study; there simply isn't the money. The law firm within the house may be acceptable under the existing zoning.
- C: JCu: I also want to touch on Diane's earlier comment. Reading all the notes, State Street is brought up as a cut-through traffic site, reading through the meeting minutes, I don't see Grafton Street in there. Why wasn't it identified? Is there some sort of volume or street data that makes Governors Road more important?
- A: BC: That is all stuff for the traffic commission to look at. We know where the traffic is coming from and we know where they are heading to. We are looking at the Commonwealth's best management practices to see what we can use for traffic calming. Stand beside a car going 35 miles per hour on a residential road and you'll say he's speeding. Stop signs are located where they shouldn't be, but we're using them anyway. When you put up stop signs as traffic

calming it encourages people to go faster between them to make up the lost time. We put stop signs on Governors Road, but then people complained so we took them down.

C: JCu: Regarding the meeting on June 1st, I need a few weeks' notice to come to a meeting like this. I can't make that meeting. Please do something about providing more advance notice.

C: Larry Horner (LH): I have 45 years of experience in the demolition industry. I think parking just brings more traffic. The issue for the Square is traffic. If you put in parking lots there will be crime, drugs, and loitering. The parking problem is a business issue; the businesses should look for more customers elsewhere and stop complaining about parking. In terms of cut-through traffic, Church Street is a speed way. I counted 16 cars using it as a cut-through early in the morning.

C: KP: Any further questions? No. All right, if you think of anything on the way home, you can pick up the contact information for our public involvement specialist at the sign-in table on your way out. Thank you for coming.

C: BC: You can also comment through the project website.

Next Steps

The final draft of the report was delivered to the BCAC for their last review on May 25, 2011. Comments from the BCAC are due at noontime on June 3, 2011. The meeting to present the final report to the Board of Selectmen will take place in early June.

Appendix 1: Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Earl	[illegible]	Resident
Phil	Beattie	Resident
Kenneth	Caldwell	BCAC
Bill	Clark	Town of Milton
Marita & John	Cronin	Resident
Joe	Curran	Resident
Shelby	Doon	Resident
Arthur	Doyle	BCAC
Edward	Duffy	Milton Planning Board
Bob	Falconi	BCAC
Sarah	Favot	Boston Globe
Don	Fawcett	Resident
Teresa	Foley	Resident
Kurt	Fraser	BCAC
Natalie	Grentz	Resident
Jared	Hite	HSH
Kathleen	Hynes	Resident
Dick	Hynes	Resident
Carol	Joyce-Harrington	Resident
Paul	Lane	BCAC
Larry	Lerner	Resident
Ed & Carol	Lonie	Resident
Gene	Lorden	Resident
Scott	MacKeen	Milton Times
Thomas	MacLaughlin	Resident
Meryl	Manin	BCAC
Kevin	Mearn	Town of Milton
Brian	Purcell	Resident
Keri	Pyke	HSH
Adam	Roberts	Milton Patch
Frank	Schroth	Resident
Joe	Scully	Resident
Neide	Scully	Resident
Bob	Sweeney	Milton Board of Selectmen
Lee	Toma	Milton Bicycle Committee
Richard	Wells	Resident
Jean	Wilson	Warrant Committee Member
Diana	Wong	Resident



Welcome to the Town of Milton Community Meeting for the East Milton Square Parking & Access Study!

If you would like your attendance to become part of the public record, please provide the requested information below.

Name	Street Address, Town	Email Address	Telephone Number
William Clark		wclark@townofmilton.org	617 898-4847
Kathleen Hynes	20 Church St		617-698-6035
Dick Hynes	20 Church St		617-698-6035
Kevin Meaney	37 Sheridan Dr.		617-898-4848
Thomas MacLaughlin	34 Franklin St		617 698 2692
Paul Jones	3 Edge Hill Rd		617-696-0172
Richard Weiss	311 MASSDALE RD		617 898-4816
Gene Lorden	11 CHURCH ST		617-698-4157
Earl Brynnes	594 Adams St		
Arthur Doyle	85 Belcher Circle		

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Welcome to the Town of Milton Community Meeting for the East Milton Square Parking & Access Study!
 If you would like your attendance to become part of the public record, please provide the requested information below.

Name	Street Address, Town	Email Address	Telephone Number
Emeryl Marie	536 Adams St Milton	MEAYLATGROWD@Gmail.COM	617 696 1490
MB. O'Hara	42 Church St Milton		781-389-6560
Ed & Carl Lorie	71 Church St Milton		617-696-1282
Jean Wilson	61 Belcher Cir	jeanmilne@verizon.net	617 696 1646
Joe Scully	50 Franklin St	Neville and Joe @ PopNet	617-833-1805
Heide R Schley	50 Franklin St		1 617-696-0202
Natasha Juez	61 Timbers St.	njuez2003@delco.net	617-696-4142
Don Fawcett	Grant Ave	dfawcett@dependablecleaners.com	617-413-1099
F Schrott	39 Arden Rd.	frank@mymother.com	617 696 9477
BOB Falconi	41 Franklin St Milton	BOBFALC@Gmail.COM	617 696 6090
Scott Muckeen	Milton Times, 480 Adams St.		617-696-7758
Adam Roberts	Milton Patch		617-869-1434
Teresa Foley	30 Franklin St		617-696-8199
Shelby Peon	49 Franklin St.		617-298-4010
JOE CORRAN	30 GRAFTON AVE		JOSEPH.CORRAN@TALBOTS.COM
Marita & John Cronin	130 Wendell Park	JAMMCRONIN@aol.com	
Lee Toma	58 Aberdeen Rd, Milton		617.251.6528

John A. Cronin
130 Wendell Park
Milton, Mass. 02186

To: East Milton Square Parking and Access Study Committee

From: John A. Cronin, T. M. Member, Prct. 4

History and Observations

The Board of Selectmen and their East Milton Square Parking and Access Study Committee deserve praise for their efforts to add parking spaces to support the business community in East Milton.

My observations are offered as a former Chairman and member of the Milton Board of Park Commissioners, a Milton Conservation Commissioner, and the Milton Town Administrator for 33 years, and as a Civil Engineer and Town Meeting member.

Milton is a residential Community. Even today, some describe it as semi rural. 150 years ago steam railroads came to Milton. Three railroad villages emerged. Granite finishing, blacksmiths, grain stores, liveries, post offices, drug stores, cobblers, butcher shops and grocers opened for business. These were at Milton Village, Central Avenue and East Milton Square. All of this development was long before the concept of Zoning.

In May of 1922, a developer named Samuel Spector applied for a building permit to build 11 storefronts; today we would call it a strip mall, in a residential neighborhood. The Building Inspector told him to correct some deficiency and resubmit his plan. With lightening like speed, rarely seen in Town Government, a Special Town Meeting was called in the heat of summer, and on July 10, 1922 the Town, by a unanimous vote, adopted its first Zoning Bylaw proclaiming all of Milton to be Residentially Zoned except for the three Railroad Villages, where limited businesses uses were allowed. The boundaries of those business districts remain the same to this day, ninety years later.

Mr. Spector thinking he had been treated unfairly sued the Town. With Attorneys Felix Rackerman and Lincoln Bryant representing the Town, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court found in favor of the Town of Milton.

Yes, efforts have since been made to make changes and even to address East Milton parking concerns.

In 1933 the Town rejected a parking proposal for Adams Court, Bassett and Franklin Streets to use residential house sites. Later business use proposals for residential land on Mechanic Street failed to gain support.

In 1969 the Warrant Committee recommended a "Yes" vote to allow another air rights deck over the Expressway adjacent to the Wood Street ramp, opposite from Bassett Street, to be privately owned with an office building and 67 private parking spaces. The development would have provided 33 municipally owned public parking spaces, at no cost to the Town. A Zoning change was required and the Town Meeting resoundingly rejected the deal, 71 "Yes" to 156 "No".

The 1970 Town Meeting almost voted to purchase the former Warshaw Laundry property, now called 4 Franklin Street for \$70,000. It would have provided over ½ acre of public parking in the heart of the business district. The Warrant Committee recommended a "No" vote and the proposal was narrowly defeated. In their report to the Town they wrote "The Warrant Committee does not think the necessity of municipal parking in this area has been demonstrated". They added the suggestion that relief would be found by "stringent parking enforcement".

Shortly after the Town Meeting decision, the Falconi family acquired the site for that same price.

The past isn't necessarily prologue. But merchants coming to the business districts in Milton should understand that this is a Residential Community and that zoning changes should not be optimistically expected.

The Town was thrilled when Congressman Brian Donnelly helped fund the existing park which spans the canyon created by the Expressway. This canyon divided our Town. The park united the community. This park is not valued for sandboxes, seesaws, or settees. Rather, it is an important green space with lovely plantings. This park is important for the visual access to which thousands of people passing by enjoy every day. It is exactly what noted

urban planner William H. Whyte, wrote was needed in metropolitan areas. He authored the classic text, The Last Landscape.

To protect such parks and open spaces the voters of Massachusetts, through a referendum election in 1970, voted to adopt the 97th Article of Amendment to the Massachusetts Constitution **prohibiting** the diversion of existing parks, or parkland, even for parking lots or other noble purpose, even with green space swaps with shrub or tree planting, as substitutes. There is a complex procedure requiring, among other things, a 2/3rds vote of the Legislature to qualify for exemptions. It is unlikely that Congressman Lynch would be a party to such a measure. It is also quite unlikely that creating a parking lot, by trading a carefully landscaped bridge dedicated to former State Representative Josiah Babcock, a memorial to fallen Milton Police Officers and Firefighters, and community park dedicated to former Park Commissioner and State Representative M. Joseph Manning would be supported by the Legislature.

You heard a suggestion that the Park Land issue would be overcome by calling the Park "a deck". It came from a respected attorney and transportation administrator, but that suggestion will not work.

Attorney General Robert H. Quinn issued a comprehensive legal opinion on the scope and intent of Article 97 which has been respected by the courts. Beyond any doubt, the Manning Community Park is a Park and enjoys the protection which the public intended when the adopted this measure.

The consulting team is to be commended for its honest analysis that parking spaces are available in this business district.

Many of the businesses have provided parking for their customers. Milton Marketplace, the banks, Starbucks, 4 Franklin, Dunkin Donuts, Abby Park, Dependable Cleaners, to mention a few.

The Town, now limited by Proposition 2 ½, is unlikely to purchase houses to create parking. Also, there are zoning problems for merchants who might want to use house lots in the Residential Zone for parking. One model to note is how the Greenspan Trust, a number of years ago, purchased and razed two homes on Bassett Street for parking, adjacent to the Marketplace, then leased the site to the Town for municipal parking.

The businesses that generate large numbers of parkers might look to this model for relief, if the taxpayers cannot finance the various schemes sought.

The Committee is also praised for identifying more than 21 on-street parking spaces which could be made available by mere changes in the Milton Traffic Rules and Regulations.

Again, all of us in the Town are grateful for the time and effort the Committee has invested in exploring East Milton parking solutions.

John A. Cronin

617-696-5252

May 18, 2011