



October 7, 2010

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**
1st Briefing for Local Officials¹
Meeting Notes of September 28, 2010

William (Bill) Clark (Director of Planning & Community Development for the Town of Milton) opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the audience and thanking them for their attendance. He then introduced the two attending members of the East Milton Square Parking & Access Study: Keri Pyke, the project manager, and Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis, the public involvement specialist.

Highlights of the Presentation

Following his opening remarks, Bill turned the meeting over to Keri who briefed the audience on the current status of the project with a short PowerPoint presentation. Highlights of the presentation included the following:

- The purpose of the evening's presentation and Q&A session is to brief local leaders on the status and direction of the project while providing them with an opportunity ask questions, voice concerns and express their opinions.
- Topics discussed in the presentation included the following:
 - Composition of the project team.
 - An overview of the work including details on what has been accomplished to date.
 - A review of the draft evaluation criteria. These criteria were briefly discussed, but tabled for lack of time at the previous BCAC meeting. They will be addressed at the BCAC's next meeting on October 20th, 2010.
 - The BCAC is meeting October rather than September as the schedule laid out in the public involvement plan to better align the meeting of the committee and the collection of data to inform its deliberations.
 - An outline of next steps.
- Members of the project team include:
 - **The Town of Milton:** which provides leadership and oversight; as the project's owner, it is responsible for determining and implementing the preferred alternative.
 - **MassDOT, Highway Division:** also provides oversight and serves as the conduit for funding obtained by Congressman Stephen Lynch.
 - **Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates (HSH):** leads the consultant team and manages the work. Tasks being performed by HSH also include traffic, parking, public involvement and serving as the liaison between the Town, other team members and involved agencies such as MassDOT.

¹ Meeting attendance sheets are reproduced in Appendix 1.

- **ICON Architecture:** is responsible for analysis of land use and zoning. Steve Heikin will attend the next BCAC meeting to present to this committee on issues of land use and zoning.
- **ICON Parks:** is responsible for streetscape and open space. This member of the team will concentrate on the Manning Community Park and how it can be activated.
- **Todreas Hanley Associates:** will address retail activity within East Milton Square and determine how the area can maintain and increase its retail diversity and vibrancy.
- **Gill Engineering:** will provide structural expertise with regard to the deck supporting the Manning Community Park.

- The study area intersections are all located relatively close to East Milton Square itself, however, HSH will be analyzing traffic impacts for a broader area which stretches as far north as the location where Granite Avenue crosses the Neponset River before entering Boston.²

- The project team understands that East Milton Square is generally perceived as healthy. It has an array of resident businesses and is surrounded by stable neighborhoods. Protecting these neighborhoods from cut-through traffic and use as parking for the Square is a goal of this study. There are, however, several agreed-upon issues:
 - Bisection of the Square by I-93.
 - Limited success of the Manning Community Park in bridging this gap.
 - Less-than-full utilization of the park, as it is not the most comfortable destination nor particularly easy to reach as a pedestrian although observation shows it has a steady, if low level of use.
 - Surface streets that present a barrier to walking and bicycling to the park from the east and west. Members of the project team have heard this view from a number of area residents both at the first BCAC meeting and via web-based comments.
 - Widespread concern over the adequacy of the parking supply.

- Writ large, the goal of the study is come up with 3-5 options, possibly ranging from the small, quick, and easy to a very large and thorough redesign of the square. These options should address the following catalog of themes:
 - Provide demonstrable transportation benefits for all modes.
 - Address concerns regarding parking.
 - Improve safety for all users – HSH will be analyzing the crash history of study area intersections to determine whether the frequency and severity of crashes can be reduced through design.
 - Provide environmental benefits such as reducing congestion, making it easier to walk and bicycle to reduce dependence on automobiles. Addressing qualitative aspects of environmental improvement such as reducing noise through covering additional segments of I-93.
 - Improvements to aesthetics such as covering additional segments of I-93 or developing a range of options for local businesses to visually improve their facilities.
 - Protect surrounding neighborhoods from cut-through traffic and spill-over parking.
 - Succeed in a cost-benefit analysis that makes sure that the solution proposed is aligned to its order-of-magnitude cost.
 - Offer a phased approach to construction with some easy, measurable changes that can be made quickly after the study concludes in addition to longer range

- The Town will ultimately decide which option or combination of options to implement.

- The study is expected to run for roughly one year from May 2010 to May 2011. The following elements of baseline data have been collected:
 - Most turning movement counts.
 - Intersection geometries and signal timings.
 - On and off-street parking inventory.

- The parking turnover study and the recount of the Adams Street/Centre Street intersection is being held until the MWRA work has been completed for the winter. While this data may not be perfect, given the impacts of construction, it can be compared against historical data gathered in March 2009 by Kurt Fraser, a BCAC member and traffic engineer for the Town of Brookline, with volume added or subtracted accordingly. Use of historical data, provided it was gathered within the past few years, is generally accepted practice within the planning field.

² To view the graphic Keri referred to, please visit: <http://www.eastmiltonsquarestudy.com/documents.html> and look at the presentation for 9/28/2010.

- The Town of Milton and its project team are committed to open and effective public involvement. The project is making use of:
 - Traditional outreach methods: Business and Citizens' Advisory Committee (BCAC), local officials' briefings, and community meetings.
 - Electronic outreach methods: a project website, Facebook page and Twitter feed.
 - Among the forms of electronic outreach, the Facebook page and Twitter feed act as a funnel, pushing users towards the website. The website in turn allows people to learn about the project on their own time, outside of face-to-face meetings. It also helps to magnify the impact of materials generated to support the face-to-face process.
- HSH has already completed its inventory of on-street parking.³ There are different types of parking in the East Milton Square study area; they generally address time of day that parking can be used or the service zone. Parking includes:
 - 366 on street spaces, excluding the service zone.
 - 670 private off-street spaces.
 - 62 public municipal spaces, excluding the service zone.
- The next major step with regard to parking is a parking turn-over study. This study will, using the license plates of parked cars as an indicator, determine how long cars are staying in a given parking space. A question this type of study answers well is "are there cars that park for several hours in a 15 minute spot?" This in turns helps to make a determination as to whether parking regulations are achieving their stated goal.
- In general, the perception is that East Milton Square suffers from inadequate parking and the turn-over study will help to determine whether the perception is reality. Whatever solution is adopted with regard to parking, the project team will ensure that neighborhoods do not become parking lots for East Milton Square.
- Possible short-term solutions could include:
 - Changes to existing signage to make it more uniform.
 - Changes to time limit regulations.
 - Installation of parking meters to drive parking turnover and raise revenue.
 - Creation of a shared parking scheme in which businesses that close earlier can allow parking in their lots by customers of businesses open later, such as restaurants.
- Longer-term solutions would include making more parking. This is a high cost approach that would require land acquisition or the making of new space through placing more deck over I-93.
- The project team, assisted by the BCAC, is developing a set of evaluation criteria for the project. The criteria constitute a laundry list of items the BCAC can consider when weighing a given option. Some criteria are easily quantifiable while others are more qualitative in nature. The finalization of the criteria rests with the BCAC, but community members have the opportunity to comment on them and influence their development. Criteria include the following:
 - **Transportation benefits:**
 - HSH will be developing a traffic model of East Milton Square in a computer program called Synchro. Observations have already been taken in the Square by HSH staff to help calibrate this model. While traffic coming from I-93 may be hard to remove from the square, any option should show improvements in the traffic flow pattern – less congestion and shorter queues.
 - Increased pedestrian comfort such as wider sidewalks, improved organization of street furniture to make walking easier, shorter, more direct and more visible street crossings.
 - Improved bicycle facilities such as bike lanes, bike parking and bicycle racks well integrated into the street furniture.
 - Ensuring that MBTA buses can move through East Milton Square easily to encourage the use of transit to access the area.
 - **Parking:**

³ To view the graphic Keri referred to, please visit: <http://www.eastmiltonsquarestudy.com/documents.html> and look at the presentation for 9/28/2010.

- Provide a parking supply that meets current and future demand based on data and future land use patterns. ICON and Todreas-Hanley will help to develop an understanding of these future land use patterns as well as what retail needs for parking.
 - Identify shared parking where appropriate.
 - Identify areas for short and long-term parking expansion if appropriate.
- **User Safety:**
 - Reduce the frequency and severity of crashes.
 - Reduce conflict between vehicle modes and vehicles and pedestrians. This idea ties into the idea of shorter, more direct, and better lit cross-walks. These types of safety goals are some of the more easily quantifiable goals since there is a federal manual that can be used to review various options.
- **Residential Area Protection:**
 - Avoid circulation changes that add to cut-through traffic. One of the reasons the project team has expanded its survey area beyond East Milton Square is to determine whether some residential streets need traffic calming measures.
 - Avoid spill-over parking for East Milton Square in residential neighborhoods.
 - Reduce or hold constant cut-through traffic. It may be difficult to reduce cut-through traffic from I-93, but HSH will analyze this issue to determine if improvements can be made.
- **Environmental Benefits:**
 - These measures may largely be more qualitative than quantitative though traffic modeling will be able to say whether congestion has been reduced thereby improving air quality. We can also develop options which encourage uses of other modes. This can also contribute to improved air quality. Reductions in traffic noise and impervious surfaces can also be quantified.
- **Open Space:**
 - Aesthetic treatments should be in keeping with the character of the community while encouraging people to sit and stay.
 - Manning Community Park should be more fully activated with new open space introduced.
 - Wayfinding should be improved at both the pedestrian and vehicular levels. It may be that some parking difficulties stem from drivers not knowing where to park.
- **Business Climate:**
 - Foster conditions that support a mix of businesses and maintain the Square's overall economic viability. To some extent, this is a quality of life "you know it when you see it" kind of goal, but Todreas-Hanley will be able to provide some guidance in this area.
- **Land Use:**
 - The project team will look at land use changes as well as zoning regulations to see if they are having the desired impact. There may be properties it would be beneficial to redevelop and we will weave that into the mix.
- **Cost/Benefit:**
 - The option should provide a good value for the solution involved. For example, would spending a million dollars to get ten new parking spaces be worth it?
- **Phased approach:**
 - The option under discussion should offer a phased approach including small steps that can be accomplished quickly as well as longer-term steps. Initial small steps can build into a larger overall phase and phases should be cumulative such that moving ahead to a subsequent step should not require undoing of the one that came before it.
 - Solutions should be phased so that the square can still function during construction.
- Next steps include the following:
 - October 20, 2010 – meeting of the BCAC
 - November, 2010 – initial community meeting, recount of Adams Street/Centre Street intersection, and parking turn-over study.
 - December, 2010 – meeting of the BCAC, development of alternatives and preliminary engineering.⁴

⁴ Note that the last two items will continue into 2011.

Question & Answer Session

Q: Leslie Will (LW): [Looking at the study area graphic] could you please tell me what the green areas are at the top of the map?

A: Keri Pyke (KP): There are a couple of green areas up towards the Neponset River: one is a golf course, which is owned by Norfolk County and the other is the Neponset River Greenway which is a DCR property.

Q: LW: Could each of the 3-5 options you plan to develop have a phased strategy associated with it? Could the options be phases that build on each other?

A: KP: We might try to set it up so that options build on each other so you could keep cumulatively layering on enhancements. Possibly we'd set it up so that the biggest, most expensive choice is arrived at by the accumulation of the earlier phases. Ultimately, it's up to the Town and the BCAC to determine which option or combination of options will be implemented.

Q: Arthur Doyle (AD): Thinking of the evaluation criteria, where does improving traffic management fit into your goals? I want to isolate it and set it out so it's a clear action item for the BCAC.

A: KP: When I think of traffic management, I really am thinking of how we keep traffic flowing during construction, but I think you could be thinking of the way traffic circulates around the square. Can you clarify for me what you're thinking of?

A: AD: I am thinking of the way the community polices traffic. I spent a good part of last Friday in East Milton Square and cars come to a stop in the crosswalk. I've spent time in four different parts of the country and communities there have ways of keeping cars out of the crosswalk.

C: KP: It sounds to me that to some degree there's an education component needed to that drivers know they shouldn't be in the crosswalk and pedestrians know they should wait for the walk light to come on before they cross.

A: AD: I agree and I would go one step further and say that there needs to be some kind of education for the community to know what their options are to better manage traffic.

C: Bill Clark (BC): It would also be helpful for us to better notify motorists of upcoming crosswalks so they can actually see them better and stop before they are in them. We have several crosswalks that you can't see until you are either right on top of them or in them.

Q: LW: Could we do more to promote awareness of this process through the newspapers? Maybe we should put an article in the newspaper about it.

A: BC: It's already been in the East Milton Patch and the Milton Times; I've seen those articles. I can also see Scott and Adam in the back of the audience so I know this meeting will be written up as well.

Q: AD: There were also supposed to be some fliers distributed to local merchants. Did that happen?

A: BC: I had passed some out at the recent Chamber of Commerce meeting, but I have yet to deliver them door-to-door.

C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): Bill, if you need help with that, I would be happy to take the leaflets around the Square, just pick a day.

C: Jean Wilson (JW): A lot of cars bypass the whole Square by coming down Adams Street, turning onto Granite Place and from there onto Belcher Circle. This is a high-speed cut-through especially during the A.M. peak.

A: BC: Fortunately, those roads are in our scope, we will be looking at them.

C: Edward Duffy (ED): That situation isn't limited to Granite Place. Harvard Street also gets a lot of cut-through traffic that's coming over from Quincy. This isn't just limited to one area: it happens on Harvard Street, and Squantum Street and Beale Street. It's like an invasion in the morning, it's horrendous, those drivers have no respect.

Q: LW: Where are all those cars going?

C: JW: I think they are trying to get to Granite Avenue via East Milton Square.

Q: AD: I've noticed an increasing number of cars going straight through Squantum Street. The ramps that you mentioned in your presentation, are those controlled by the state?

A: KP: Yes, those ramps are owned by MassDOT and it's very unlikely that they would let you close them.

C: John Virgona (JV): This study started out as a parking study and we expanded it to cover access around East Milton Square. We want to look at the flow of traffic, but this can't be a study on traffic through Milton. I've been burned by scope creep in the past and I want to warn us against it here. We don't want to get beyond what we have the financial ability to support the consultants to analyze. I appreciate your problems, but I don't know if we have the money to get over to Harvard Street.

A: KP: John, I appreciate your awareness of scope creep, but some of what's been mentioned actually is in our scope. I can tell you that we don't have the resources to put a tube⁵ down on every single street, but I think we can come up with a menu of traffic calming options and recommend some further study to determine where you might want to implement those options.

C: BC: I just want to make a comment here that if some of you are looking at this conversation about traffic calming and traffic flow and are thinking 'I don't even want to think about this, I want to think about parking,' that these and other questions that HSH has posed in their evaluation criteria are important to answer. We will need these answers for the application process that we would need to go through to get more parking.

C: LW: Thinking of the evaluation criteria I'd like you to reword the third bullet under the environmental goal so that the one on the website reflects the way you have it written in the PowerPoint. The PowerPoint version makes it clear that you want to reduce the travel lanes not the open space.

A: NCC: I will amend that tomorrow and revise the version that is on the website.

Q: LW: Do you have a date for the October community meeting set at this time?

A: KP: We have tentatively set the next BCAC meeting for the 20th of October, but I will have Nate work on firming that up and start the scheduling on the public meeting as well.

Q: Paul Lane (PL): Will you provide us with a rough estimate of what this will cost?

A: KP: We are going to give you order of magnitude costs, but it's still too early for that at this time.

C: PL: I raise it because we started a school program here which was very successful in the end, but it began at a projected cost of \$100 million and it wound up costing \$150 million.

⁵ An automatic traffic counting device.

Q: JW: Can you explain a little bit more about how you arrived at there being 300+ on street parking spaces in East Milton Square? That seems high to me.

A: KP: I was a little surprised myself at that figure, but I the area we counted isn't just what you'd think of as East Milton Square, we looked into the neighborhoods both to the north and south of the Square itself. The reason for doing that is because we need to know what's going on outside the square in terms of parking especially as we think about ways to protect that area from spill-over parking from the square.

C: Robert Sweeney (RS): I think it would be helpful if you could better advertise the next BCAC meeting, maybe put it on your project website. I know there are many people in my neighborhood who would like to come to those meetings and voice their opinions. I think the citizens need access to these meetings. The Milton Times is a good vehicle to broadcast this information and I know the Milton Patch is growing. Also, I'd say that for your public meeting, you are going to need a bigger meeting space.

A: BC: The next BCAC meeting will most likely be on October 20, we'll get that information to the Milton Patch and Milton Times. I'm thinking of either Cunningham Hall or the Council on Aging for the community meeting.

C: [No name given]: I walk through East Milton Square every day, I drive through and I even bicycle through. Sometimes I go down there and I see an MBTA bus plugging up the intersection of Adams Street and Franklin Street and he has no idea he's blocking the intersection.

A: AD: I think that's the sort of thing I'm talking about in terms of education. This community can help people understand that they can't do that kind of thing.

Next Steps

The next major public involvement milestone will be a meeting of the BCAC on October 20, 2010. The first large community meeting is tentatively slated for early November, 2010. The next BCAC session after the one to be held on October 20th is currently scheduled for December 15, 2010.

The collection of the parking survey data and recounting of turning movements at the intersection of Adams Street and Centre Street remain on hiatus at the time of the writing of these minutes. The Town and Project Team are closely monitoring the MWRA construction to determine whether a portion of this data can be gathered before November, 2010.

Appendix 1: Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Sarah	Bonaiuto	Congressman Stephen Lynch's Office
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Ken	Caldwell	BCAC
Bill	Clark	Town of Milton
Nick	Doherty	Senator Brian Joyce's Office
Arthur	Doyle	BCAC
Edward	Duffy	Town of Milton
John	Grant	Milton Fire Department
Paul	Lane	BCAC
Marylin	Mannin	BCAC
M. Joseph	Manning	Town of Milton
Keri	Pyke	Howard/Stein-Hudson
Robert	Sweeney	Town of Milton (Selectman)
John	Virgona	BCAC
Lesley	Will	BCAC
Jean	Wilson	Town of Milton (Warrant Committee)

Note: outreach for this meeting was particularly intensive. During late August and early September the project team contacted many local officials by telephone and specifically invited them to the briefing. For a full listing of invited local officials, please see the original sign-in sheets which follow on the next page. Turn-out for this meeting was relatively low most likely due to the weather which was very rainy on the night the session took place.



Welcome to the Local Officials' Briefing for the East Milton Square Parking and Access Study!

If you are here representing a local officials' office, please provide your information in the gray bar below that individual's entry

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation	Email Address	Address	Town	Zip Code	Present?
John	Ahonen	Warrant Committee Member					
Henry	Bell	Warrant Committee Member					
Kevin	Chase	Warrant Committee Member					
Linda	Dorcena Forry	State Representative		Room 433, State House	Boston	02133	
Edward	Duffy	Milton Planning Board					
John	Folcarelli	Warrant Committee Member					
✓ John	Grant	Fire Chief	jgrant@townofmilton.org	515 Canton Avenue	Milton	02186	
John	Hurley	Warrant Committee Member					
Emily	Innes	Milton Planning Board	elcimilton@gmail.com	300 Reedsdale Road	Milton	02186	
Ewan	Innes	Warrant Committee Chair	Ewan.Innes@dunkinbrands.com	525 Canton Avenue	Milton	00218	
Peter	Jackson	Chair Milton Planning Board	placks@comcast.net	14 Capen Street	Milton	02186	
Brian	Joyce	State Senator		Room 413A, State House	Boston	02133	
Nick	Doherty	Aide		Nicholas.Doherty@State.ma.us			
Helen	Kiddy	Warrant Committee Clerk					



Welcome to the Local Officials' Briefing for the East Milton Square Parking and Access Study!

If you are here representing a local officials' office, please provide your information in the gray bar below that individual's entry

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation	Email Address	Address	Town	Zip Code	Present?
John	Ahonen	Warrant Committee Member					
Henry	Bell	Warrant Committee Member					
Kevin	Chase	Warrant Committee Member					
Linda	Dorcena Forry	State Representative		Room 433, State House	Boston	02133	
Edward	Duffy	Milton Planning Board		35 GRANITE PLAZA	MILTON	02186	YES
John	Folcarelli	Warrant Committee Member					
John	Grant	Fire Chief	Jgrant@townofmilton.org	515 Canton Avenue	Milton	02186	
John	Hurley	Warrant Committee Member					
Emily	Innes	Milton Planning Board	elcimilton@gmail.com	300 Reedsdale Road	Milton	02186	
Ewan	Innes	Warrant Committee Chair	Ewan.Innis@dunkinbrands.com	525 Canton Avenue	Milton	00218	
Peter	Jackson	Chair Milton Planning Board	piacks@comcast.net	14 Capen Street	Milton	02186	
Brian	Joyce	State Senator		Room 413A, State House	Boston	02133	
Helen	Kiddy	Warrant Committee Clerk					



Welcome to the Local Officials' Briefing for the East Milton Square Parking and Access Study!

If you are here representing a local officials' office, please provide your information in the gray bar below that individual's entry

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation	Email Address	Address	Town	Zip Code	Present?
Stephen	Lynch	Congressional Representative	Sarah.Bonaiuto@mail.house.gov	88 Black Falcon Avenue, Suite 340	Boston	02210	
<i>Sarah</i> Joseph	<i>Bonaiuto</i> Lynch	Milton DPW Director	jlynch@townofmilton.org	629 Randolph Avenue	Milton	02186	
Bernie	Lynch	Milton Planning Board	blynch@inspecthouse.com	34 Milton Road	Milton	02186	
Marion	McEttrick	Chair of the Selectmen		525 Canton Avenue	Milton	02186	
Kevin	Mearn	Town Administrator	kmearn@townofmilton.org	525 Canton Avenue	Milton	02186	
Raj	Pathak	Warrant Committee Member					
Deval	Patrick	Governor		Room 280 State House	Boston	02133	
Jean	Powers	Warrant Committee Member					
Angelo	Scaccia	State Representative	Rep.AngeloScaccia@hou.state.m	Room 166, State House	Boston	02133	
John	Shields	Member of the Selectmen		525 Canton Avenue	Milton	02186	
Robert	Sweeney	Secretary of the Selectmen	prizzi@townofmilton.org	525 Canton Avenue	Milton	02186	✓
Walter	Timilty	State Representative	Rep.WalterTimilty@hou.state.ma.	Room 167, State House	Boston	02133	

