

Minutes

Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee

June 9, 2021 7:00PM – Public Forum #2
Held remotely via Zoom

Committee members (in attendance noted by Y/N):

John VanScoyoc, Chair	Y	Wendy Friedman	Y	Tom Nally	Y
Rachna Balakrishna	Y	Joe Gaudino	Y	Carlos Ridruejo	N
Deborah Brown	Y	Wendy Machmuller	Y	Mark Zarrillo	Y

Staff present: Kara Brewton, Alexandra Vecchio, Todd Kirrane, Arran French, Amrita Acharya

Consultants present from Toole Design: Karen Fitzgerald, Alex McKeag, Pete Robie,

Meeting materials included: agenda; powerpoint by Toole Design 6-9-21; powerpoint by Committee 6-9-21; Q&A (attached here); Chat (attached here).

Guests included: Alison Cohen, Allison Hastings Jernigan, Amanda Zimmerman, Amie Lindenboim, Anne Meyers, Anne Sudduth, Anne Trecker, Beth Kantz, Betsy DeWitt, Bill Reyelt, Brook Finity, Bryan Fuller, Carol Lammers, Cathy Neal, Charles Osborne, Christine Lau, Crispin Lopez, Cynthia Drake, Cynthia Snow, Dana Varzan-Parker, David Gladstone, David Kroop, David Trevvett, Deane Coady, Diane Sokal, Edith Brickman, Ellen and Jim Perrin, Ellen Gilmore, Emily Jacobsen, Frances Shedd-Fisher, Frank Mendoza, Fred Perry, Gail Shafran, GORDON BENNETT, Harvey Willson, Hassan Makkeh, Hugh Mattison, James scharback, Janelle Pena, Jay Han, Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, John Bassett, John Dempsey, John Motsis, Joseph Maranzano, Kevin England, Kim Smith, Larry Sochrin, Leonard Wholey, Linda Pehlke, Luke Laverty, Lynda Roseman, Lynnae Terrill, Marianne Lee, Martha Davis, . Martin Hegen, Matthew Hyatt, Matthew Shakespeare, Michael Berger, Michael Sterling, Mike Toffel, Mitch Heineman, Monica von Huene, Nate Tucker, Nicole Haber, Olivia Fischer Fox, Paul Saner, Petra Bignami, Polly Welch, Randolph Meiklejohn, Robert Daves, Ryan (he/him) Black, Sam Rojas, Scott Englander, Stephen Burrington, sung hong, Susan Kaplan, susan Rothstein, T C, Representative Tommy Vitolo, Wyndor DePetro, Yolanda Rodriguez

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John VanScoyoc opened the meeting, noting that it was being held remotely on the Zoom platform due to COVID, and after checking that all participants' audio/video were working well, and Kara announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Presentation

John VanScoyoc noted this was the second of two public forums and that much of the evening would be with Toole Design Group, to talk about the Boylston Street design. He reminded everyone that videos of all the meetings were on the Committee's website. He noted that now is the time where the Committee's work and ideas are not fully cooked, a perfect time to check in with the larger community. The Committee's mission included recommendations from the

previous visioning group, for example, to use form-based zoning. But it also included more specific town wide goals set by the Select Board such increasing opportunities for additional housing growth, commercial development, and incentivizing business ownership by underrepresented groups. He invited everyone to use the Q&A and chat features of Zoom, noting that there would be a live question and answer period later in the meeting.

Karen Fitzgerald of Toole Design Group introduced her team, Alex McCaig and Pete Roby. Building on previous planning documents and studies of the corridor, they presented a couple concepts for Boylston Street. When looking at existing conditions, they noted that the eastern end is a mixed use neighborhood on smaller lots, the middle becomes a little bit more residential with neighborhood centric uses like the Old Lincoln School, and then further west are some more auto-centric uses, along with properties that are more likely to be available for higher density residential development. Many storefronts currently keep their blinds closed, and there is very little transparency, which signals that they don't see the current streetscape as an amenity to a successful business. Sidewalk conditions are in generally good shape, although narrow for commercial uses, and there are multiple places where conditions are not accessible and need to be improved. The number of pedestrian crossings are limited. Vehicles use the shoulder as a parking lane, even though it is usually only 6' wide and parking is not technically allowed by the state. There is not a lot of pedestrian scale lighting and areas of respite or green space are few and far between. Street trees are for the most part absent unless provided on private property. The existing travel lanes are generously wide, encouraging speeding.

The first concept shows parking on both sides, accommodations for cyclists, and a minimum of sidewalk, only 5' wide. Travel lanes are narrowed down to 10'. Eliminating the center median makes this concept possible. The second concept shows a flexible parking zone on one side and a wider sidewalk and tree canopy on the other side. The third and fourth concepts contemplate one travel lane in each direction, with and without a green median in the middle. Both the third and fourth have generous sidewalks and tree zones, as well as an 11' travel lane which is better for emergency vehicles. The plan with the median allows for turning movements midstream, whereas the plan without the median allows for shorter pedestrian crossing times.

In response to some questions in the Q&A and chat feature, Toole Design noted:

- One of their colleagues at Toole ran the complete streets program for MassDOT, and she did not have any issues with any of the concepts shown tonight.
- The volumes seen along this part of Boylston are right on the threshold of consideration going down from four lanes to two.

Representative Tommy Vitolo noted that Rep. Nika Elguardo poured over the concepts together and were very excited about the prospect of a Route 9 corridor that works well for our neighborhoods as well as friends in Newton, Wellesley, and points West. He asked for clarification on ownership and how decisions are made, which jurisdiction would pay for things, etc. Kara Brewton noted that unlike Gateway East, this portion is completely within the state's control and any funding process would likely include state and perhaps federal funding funneled through MassDOT. She mentioned the Central Transportation Planning Staff corridor analysis, design and presentation that was made to the Metropolitan Planning Organization prior to COVID. They and our Transportation Administrator have given us an indication that if we can

demonstrate that the community as a whole could endorse one or two of these concepts, then MassDOT would know that there would be political support to see these significant changes. Finally, she mentioned that MassDOT's own internal processes around complete streets stopped them from simply repaving Boylston Street a couple years ago, recognizing that they needed to advance their own complete street goals at the same time. Rep. Vitolo stated that if we were going to ask for state and federal resources, we should also take a very serious look at upzoning to allow for more commercial and residential uses of the area, including income-restricted affordable housing.

Following a couple clarifications about dimensions shown in the concept plans, Gordon Bennett thought there should be some opportunities to put parking below the Boylston Street playground. Scott Englander asked whether Toole Design had considered a variation of Concept #3, but showing the tree lawn between the bikeway and the sidewalk. Karen Fitzgerald noted that was possible, but there would also want to be a buffer between the parked cars and the bike lane, and there probably wasn't enough room to do both while maintaining a nice wide sidewalk.

Emily Jacobson urged for the Committee to really advocate for the best solution for the neighborhood rather than traffic, as those points of view would be very well take care of.

Toole Design clarified in response to more Q&A that the bike lane is protected in all the concepts, and that they weren't aware of a single example in Massachusetts that uses reversible lanes for a roadway like this. Melting systems for snow removal like Minneapolis could be possible, but they also have a policy to maintain those systems well. Having a two-way bike lane on one side of the road rather than one direction on each side would not be as safe, especially with side street crossings and the student population using this part of the corridor. In response to a question by Bill Reyal, they would speak with their colleagues in Cambridge and see what specifics made them comfortable with narrowing down Mass Ave. into one lane near Central Square.

The Committee thanked Toole for their presentation, and then Wendy Friedman reviewed a summary of the survey results the Committee conducted. In addition to what had already been discussed, she emphasized that the desire to improve pedestrian access, transforming this area from what feels like a highway to a more neighborhood street was one of the most frequent recommendations made. Business owners recognized the commercial potential of the area and residents noted the lack of good commercial offerings.

Tom Nally then reviewed constraints and opportunities for the corridor. For example, there are sites that are small and/or where business owners really don't want to make any changes (such as the U-Haul site), and then there are those that would like to hear from the community about what improvements or changes they would like to see. Preliminary recommendations are broken down into three categories:

- 1) Preserve – for example the Madris residential building at the corner of Cypress & Boylston, street trees adjacent to Dunkin Donuts and Cameron Street as well as the Old Lincoln School site, and also on street parking especially for residents that have no driveway or other vehicular access. Strategies for these goals include revised design guidelines.

- 2) Enhance – business storefronts along with a greater amount of more flexible façade loan funds - and an opening up of the blank wall along the Old Lincoln School. Additionally, perhaps making it easier to do some infill development on the eastern end, e.g., no special permits.
- 3) Transform - including changes to the street cross section of Boylston Street, such as wider sidewalks, adding trees intermittently between parking spaces, adding a bicycle lane, easier north-south pedestrian connections (especially rebuilding the Davis Path footbridge), etc. On private properties, the Committee is looking for ways to disincentivize the continuation of auto-related properties in the corridor, widened setbacks to support a modified streetscape, and added tree canopy and open space. Key sites where additional housing and commercial development could be sited include the property behind the Madris building, the Mobil gas station site in combination with the two adjacent properties to the north, and the Dunkin Donuts and Valvoline sites together. This would likely require some ability to build denser than one-story commercial buildings, for example. At the eastern end of the site, the owners of 10 Brookline Place have indicated laboratory use at 10 Brookline Place. Specifically, the Committee has communicated with the owners of 10 Brookline Place what pedestrian and streetscape functions they wanted to see with any redevelopment of the 10 Brookline Place site. Additionally, the Brookline Housing Authority are looking at adding housing units on their property between High & Juniper Streets.

Returning to the western corridor of the site, Tom noted that the Committee was studying a transition in height from the existing height of the Madris building stepping down to the adjacent residential properties. At the Mobil gas station site, there is opportunity to add more density, but concern about a narrow/ canyon effect on Cypress if we don't also include significant, 25' setbacks from the curb. That setback could be stretched all the way down to Smythe Street. 3D modeling is underway to better understand what recommendations should be made.

Finally, Tom mentioned Site Plan Review as an administrative tool that the Committee is considering adding at the same time as any zoning changes. Site Plan Review has been recommended in the past as a helpful way to require tree canopy standards for the entire Town, including this corridor. This recommendation has also been discussed through the Urban Forestry Master Plan process.

Kara Brewton then polled participants to see how they heard about tonight's forum: 23% through the notify me email list, 18% networking with other organizations, 18% personal invitations, and then other methods such as social media.

In response to a question by Luke Laverty, Kara noted that Herb Chambers was a pre-existing use even though it conflicts with current zoning. The Committee keeps coming back to importance of making Boylston Street more pedestrian-friendly, which will in turn mean less on-street amenities such as on-street parking that would further lengthen the viability of auto-related uses.

In response to a question by Edie Brickman, Tom Nally noted that a Subcommittee of the Economic Development Advisory Board was researching the possibility of lab uses in Brookline, but there would likely be very few parcels large enough to accommodate such a use other than 10 Brookline Place. Tom also mentioned that the Committee had asked the owners of 10 Brookline Place, Bulfinch, to consider connections through the site for the bus and green line,

tree canopy, and pedestrian amenities. Kara Brewton added that Bulfinch would be presenting for the first time at the Committee on June 21st, in response to the Committee' memo about what they'd like to see in the public realm.

Scott Englander voiced support for concepts 3 and 4 that Toole Design presented, as it had the potential to eliminate and slow traffic.

Linda Pehlke was concerned about new developping being more expensive from a commercial rent point of view, and whether some commercial spaces should be subsidized. And yes, she agreed with the Committee's thoughts on considering form-based zoning for the corridor. Finally, she wanted to echo Scott Englander's point of view on the roadway design and was excited that the Committee was even talking about that.

Wyndson DePetro and Tom Nally discussed whether there were any feasible additional locations where a connection could be made north-south over the T-tracks, and agreed that there likely weren't.

Kara Brewton then summarized the anticipated timeline over the summer, including many public meetings prior to the zoning warrant close around early September. Additionally, some of the infrastructure recommendations would continue on with DPW and MassDot in the years to come. Larger redevelopments such as 10 Brookline Place and the Brookline Housing Authority sites would not likely happen for several years to come.

John VanScoyoc then concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation, encouraging people to talk with their neighbors and sign up for meeting notifications over the summer, follow information posted on the Committee's website, etc.

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Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm.

Copy of Q&A function in Zoom

1, I live in this area and would love to be able to commute by bicycle. Unfortunately I don't feel safe biking along this corridor. It would be wonderful if that could be fixed and connect to a broader network of bike lanes. Are there options for protected bike lanes?,Michael Sterling,Michael.paul.sterling@gmail.com,

Answer: "Great, Michael! Yes, one of the options includes protected bike lanes."

2,"How has the committee looked at the Brook house- there are 765 units and more attention should be paid to how this project affects this complex - ie- those who are residents.",Anonymous Attendee,,

Answer: "Does "this project" refer to making improvements to Boylston Street? If you can be more specific, that would be very helpful!"

3,"This Q may be premature, but where do you stand with MADOT?",Frances Shedd-Fisher,Fsheddfisher@aol.com,

Answer: "Hi Frances, a Study was done which should be on our website. So MassDOT is aware of our Study. Stay tuned."

4,Planting the median was mentioned; does that mean the median is likely to stay?,Frances Shedd-Fisher,Fsheddfisher@aol.com,

Answer: "We don't know yet; this is just one option being proposed in these early stages. Thank you, Frances!"

5,What possibilities are there for changes to travel lane width? Would State regulations be a limiting factor?,Kevin England,kevinaengland@gmail.com,

Answer: "At this time, one lane is not a viable option throughout the Corridor. As a State Hgwy there are emergency routes which must be maintained. State regs are definitely a factor. MassDOT is interested in our Study, however."

6,Will the traffic lights at Cypress and Bolyston change to include turn-only lanes? Turning left in either direction from Cypress is very difficult and at times dangerous. Thank you.,Anonymous Attendee,

live answered

7,I put this in chat but realize it may belong here: Does the 5 foot sidewalk width in concept 1 mean five consistently clear feet?,Stephen Burrington,stephenburrington@gmail.com,

live answered

8,"The value to adjacent properties of having parking in front varies from one side of the street to another, and the straightaway aspect of the street, even when the median is removed, increases vehicle speeds. Can you consider moving the parking from one side to the other a couple of times, producing a chicane effect?",Stephen Burrington,stephenburrington@gmail.com,

live answered

9,Do we know if MDOT will continue to require the median?,Linda Pehlke,lindaolsonpehlke@gmail.com,
live answered

10,How will ambulances to the medical area get through?,Marianne Lee,leeyuenwah9@gmail.com,
live answered

11,Has anyone confirmed that the proposed improvements would be allowed by the state highway (rt.9) beauracy???,Betsy DeWitt,betsy@betsydewitt.com,
Answer: MassDOT very aware of this Study and interested in what we are doing. Public support will be a huge driving factor.

12,Do the concept options also indicate how it would change car traffic? Like improve traffic flow? Or add travel time?,Nicole Haber,nicole.guidry@gmail.com,
live answered

13,What is the width of the Median in Concept #4?,Linda Pehlke,lindaolsonpehlke@gmail.com,
live answered

14,What do we know about traffic if there are less lanes?,Fred Perry,fsp@boselec.com,
live answered

15,"If we decline to a total of 2 lanes (which is exciting), some cars might vanish (via biking), some would queue longer, and others would take different routes. Can you estimate these impacts?",Mike Toffel,mtoffel@hbs.edu,
live answered

16,How is zoning a part of this conversation? A new car dealership doesn't put a banner out that we're open for pedestrian-oriented business.,Luke Lavery,lplavery@ameritech.net,
live answered

17,I agree with "Anonymous" comment - I hope there is an integrated study including Brook House - dropping a lane will make an already difficult situation for those of us who live there significantly worse.,Larry Sochrin,lsochrin@rcn.com,
live answered

18,Have you explored options that would make the road way less straight?,Emily Jacobsen,emily.jac@gmail.com,
live answered

19,Do reversible lanes work on roadways like boylston street?,Charles Osborne,charles@bellalta3.com,
live answered

20,Which design # includes the protected bike lane?,Anne Sudduth,ARSudduth@gmail.com,

live answered

21, "If adding parking on route 9, will side streets add/increase resident only parking?", Nicole Haber, nicole.guidry@gmail.com,
live answered

22, City of Arlington tried reversible lanes., Charles Osborne, charles@bellalta3.com,
Answer: "Thank you, Charles!"

23, "When Herb Chambers dealership recently renovated it's whole property —with neighborhood input and opposition— the landscaping was never put in place, there are no trees!! When do these "visions" actually have an impact on these projects?", susan rothstein, srothstein@hammondre.com,
Answer: Susan yes the lack of trees is something that has come up and comments from attendees at our last session. It is worth a conversation with Audi to be sure.

24, Also are the Guidelines that were developed in 1994 (I think) ever put into a form that they are now enforceable and usable? I think they have to be passed by TM?, susan rothstein, srothstein@hammondre.com,
Answer: "Hi Susan, the Committee will be reviewing, updating the design guidelines! You are right, they are very outdated."

25, "Have you looked at additional opportunities to span the MBTA tracks? In the same way that it's important to get people north-south across route 9, I think it's important to get people across the tracks because it acts as a barrier separating the north and south sides of town.", Wyndor DePetro, wdepetro@gmail.com,
live answered

26, "I put this in the chat, but it may be better here: We absolutely could use laboratory/biotech commercial here. Has the committee spoken with real estate experts who understand what the minimum density needed is to support office and/or lab space?", Amanda Zimmerman, alzimmerman@gmail.com,
Answer: "We have spoken with Bulfinch who owns Ten Brookline Place, who is interested in lab space there"

27, "Has the committee thought much about parcel size, meaning possibly looking at requiring a certain minimum lot size? I would suggest relatively smaller is better for pedestrian scale. Also concerned about the rent cost for new businesses. New space will likely be more costly. If we are serious about local business we have to be realistic and possibly subsidize from developer or other.", Linda Pehlke, lindaolsonpehlke@gmail.com,
live answered

28, any specific bio-lab levels are considered?, T C, tracychenmarketing@gmail.com,
live answered

29, public health safety concerns/guides - esp. residential areas?, T C, tracychenmarketing@gmail.com,

live answered

30,I hope that there is an incentive to combine the sites just East of Homewood Suites!,Fred Perry,fsp@boselec.com,

Answer: "Thank you, Fred -"

Copy of Chat function in Zoom

18:55:45 From Wendy Friedman to Panelists : Sorry, chaos here. Did I miss anything?

18:58:07 From Rachna Balakrishna to Panelists : I am connected by phone since my computer audio is not working

19:05:59 From Wendy Machmuller to Panelists :
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/1605/Boylston-Street-Corridor-Study-Committee>

19:06:14 From Wendy Machmuller to Panelists : Above is the link to the Committee's website

19:06:46 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Link below is the Committee's website

19:06:55 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone :
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/1605/Boylston-Street-Corridor-Study-Committee>

19:09:35 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Toole's design presentation will be available on the website (link above) by end of day on Thursday.

19:12:22 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : A recording of this entire session will also be available on the website tomorrow. Last week's recording is already up.

19:12:56 From Deane Coady to Everyone : green space could be greatly enhanced by adding/promoting green roof gardens and solar panels. Think flat roofs: Audi, newer residential and commercial construction, the historic fire station, for examples. Think carbon sequestration, transpiration from plants/trees, evaporation - green lush gardens bring temperatures down!

19:15:35 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Thank you Deane, all great ideas!

19:16:03 From Susan Kaplan to Panelists : How do you change the cypress St / business look- it needs improvement on rte 9. How to work with developers/ etc

19:16:08 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Please type your questions in the Q & A

19:16:25 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Feel free to provide comments in the chat!

19:17:02 From Sam Rojas to Panelists : I just moved into a house in this corridor. As someone that uses a bike as their main form of transportation, I'm excited to see that there is a focus on improving the walkability of the area

19:17:09 From John Bassett to Panelists : Are bio labs considered as a possible use?

19:17:11 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Susan, later in presentation we will talk about areas to enhance, improve.

19:17:19 From Cathy Neal to Panelists : Assuming that Route 9 is still a state highway, how can the town make any significant changes to the sidewalks, cross walk functionality, enhancements that truly make this a "place" rather than primarily a car route?

19:17:51 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : As for developers we have been holding interviews with many, as well as existing property owners. We will discuss briefly later in presentation

19:17:56 From Harvey Willson to Panelists : Green roofs are a great idea. there was discussion of that for the Hotel, but it never happened.

19:18:36 From David Gladstone to Panelists : Need a balance for small businesses of both pedestrian and availability of parking for people to patronize these businesses.

19:18:38 From Cathy Neal to Panelists : RE: Deane's comments - Lincoln School Students did an after school program redesigning the same issues of pedestrian access, bikes, greening.

19:19:07 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Roof top gardens and roof tops restaurants were a big ask during the Visioning process

19:20:16 From Harvey Willson to Panelists : Alex is hard to hear...

19:21:46 From Michael Berger to Everyone : The current corridor development seems to have very little concern for tree canopy and open space. The new Audi dealership and the new Hotel have no or very limited trees. This is not conducive to pedestrians.

19:21:57 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Sam, welcome to the neighborhood. We would like to see the same.

19:22:30 From Bill Reyelt to Panelists : Particularly in front of old Lincoln, cars actually park ON the sidewalk

19:22:35 From Anne Sudduth to Everyone : The heat on the Audi dealership corner is intense in comparison to the gas station corner that has big tree cover.

19:23:02 From Michael Sterling to Panelists : The bike lanes look great!

19:23:06 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : RE: Deane's comments - Lincoln School Students did an after school program redesigning the same issues of pedestrian access, bikes, greening.

19:23:11 From Stephen Burrington to Panelists : Does the 5 foot sidewalk width in concept 1 mean five consistently clear feet?

19:23:30 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Assuming that Route 9 is still a state highway, how can the town make any significant changes to the sidewalks, cross walk functionality, enhancements that truly make this a "place" rather than primarily a car route?

19:23:43 From Pete Robie - Toole Design to Panelists : 5' clear would be the minimum

19:24:22 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : John, a lab use may be a possibility in the future at 10 Brookline Place. A market analysis done by Pam McKinney during the visioning process revealed that lab space was not particular viable on the corridor due to the narrow sites.

19:25:08 From Bryan Fuller to Everyone : Would a cross bridge make more sense at Lincoln?

19:25:18 From GORDON BENNETT to Panelists : How about moving the bike lane to the center strip?

19:26:05 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Cathy good questions. A transportation / design study was done by the State to address some of these element. A copy of this Study is on our website.

19:26:25 From Wendy Friedman to Everyone : Gordon, I think without lights/exit points along Boylston, as center lane would be difficult. But an interesting thought to consider!

19:26:52 From Michael Berger to Everyone : The corridor seems to be a dividing line between different uses on either side. The design should include ways to cross over Rt. 9.

19:27:56 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Bryan - Cross walks slow down traffic AND make the street more of a "parkway/ community avenue." We want to encourage more people to populate Route 9 so those commuters recognize its NOT a highway.

19:28:33 From GORDON BENNETT to Panelists : Commonwealth ave in Boston flips the bike lane to inside ... works well. Would slow traffic and allow a safe zone for pedestrian crossing through the entire cypress to Harvard length

19:28:33 From Bryan Fuller to Everyone : i agree, I just mean for Lincoln. The other two cross walks would still slow it down

19:29:16 From Michael Sterling to Panelists : I always feel very anxious walking along this part of Boylston with small children. This design would help with that.

19:29:23 From Michael Berger to Everyone : Since Rt 9 is a state road, what restrictions are placed on the design to make the road better for Brookline?

19:29:24 From Linda Pehlke to Everyone : Now youâ€™re talking!

19:29:32 From Scott Englander to Everyone : Bryan, pedestrian bridges arenâ€™t used in contexts where the goal is to be people-friendly and walkable. The ramps (assuming there were space for them) double the crossing distance, and the grade changes increase effort required, especially for those with disabilities. They also create isolated confined spaces that can feel unsafe at night.

19:29:32 From Sam Rojas to Panelists : Concept 3 is exactly the vision I was hoping to see

19:29:43 From Bill Reyelt to Panelists : a robust street tree program could also help to narrow the perceived road width / create more friction for motorists

19:30:04 From David Gladstone to Panelists : Patron traffic in service businesses are reduced where there isnâ€™t appropriate parking available as compared to some other business district in Brookline area

19:30:11 From Nicole Haber to Panelists : Planted median looks great!

19:31:03 From Hugh Mattison to Panelists : I would like to hear comment about a parklet on Cameron St. behind Dunkin Donuts. Also, how about requiring Homewood Suites to add greenery behind its glass panels instead of just curtains.

19:31:28 From Stephen Burrington to Panelists : Not sure where you want questions, here or in Q&A â€”The value to adjacent properties of having parking in front varies from one side of the street to another, and the straightaway aspect of the street, even when the median is removed, increases vehicle speeds. Can you consider moving the parking from one side to the other a couple of times, producing a chicane effect?

19:31:30 From John Bassett to Everyone : I was involved in the permitting process for 2 Brookline Place. We decided against allowing lab use there. Safety requirements for level 2 or 3 labs are extensive. Public safety people need special training to respond. Cambridge has done this. Our fire ladders only reach about 80 feet. 2 Brookline Place is too tall to be all reached. This is not true of 10 Brookline Place. But if you read the safety requirements for level 3 labs you might question the safety of putting such labs in a place dense with other uses. John Bassett

19:31:42 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Alex - Bravo - also the issues of heat gain can be mitigated better with increased trees @ grade.

19:32:16 From Michael Sterling to Panelists : With only a single lane and parallel parking could that cause traffic issues?

19:32:26 From T C to Panelists : Does this design support the high volume of traffic?

19:32:40 From susan rothstein to Panelists : The Cypress St neighborhood basically prevented Herb Chambers from making that corner a 4 story

parking lot for his cars which was great, but the opportunity to have better green landscaping and trees never materialized. How and where in this process do the "visions" get actually effected? Their landscaping in miniscule.

19:32:45 From Susan Kaplan to Everyone : Please note- rte 9 or Boylston St is a highway. For most people it is a road that goes west or east- I would love to see more trees etc. But we can't lose sight of the purpose of rte 9.

The back roads are now jammed as more drivers try to maneuver around Rte 9. Those lovely neighborhoods have become congested and clogged

19:33:31 From Lynda Roseman to Panelists : Does anyone remember the study by the MIT grad student did of this corridor? Lots of community engagement? What ever happened with that?

19:33:35 From Bryan Fuller to Everyone : I love this example, but I would be shocked if DOT was okay with it.

19:33:42 From Hugh Mattison to Panelists : Trees on medians often do not survive because of road salt and limited rootzone space.

19:33:49 From Lynda Roseman to Panelists : That was students, plural

19:34:08 From Scott Englander to Everyone : Eliminating a travel lane on each side really opens up the possibilities, and

19:34:13 From Hassan Makkeh to Panelists : The Planted Median transforms lower Boylston from a highway where automobilists are prioritized to a local main avenue where pedestrian and cyclists are welcomed.

19:34:29 From Scott Englander to Everyone : "and I'm guessing will help reduce/slow traffic.

19:34:32 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Alex - can this example of center planting medium only be achievable if Boston moves in the direction of other cities across the globe that create parking outside the city with buses leading into the city center

19:34:37 From Kara Brewton to Lynda Roseman, All Panelists : Hi, Lynda - This work is a continuation. The MIT study was great, but stopped short of specific zoning or capital improvements.

19:35:10 From Lynda Roseman to Panelists : Thanks Kara

19:35:12 From T C to Everyone : worrying that the traffic could be worsen

19:35:47 From Bryan Fuller to Everyone : I agree with TC, it would be bumper to bumper

19:36:18 From Anne Sudduth to Everyone : Don't forget the need for trees in the Cypress/Brinton section.

19:36:19 From Scott Englander to Everyone : There is plenty of experience from other places where decreasing traffic capacity simple eliminated traffic.

19:36:29 From Scott Englander to Everyone : *simply

19:36:33 From Sam Rojas to Panelists : To TC's point, I am immediately thinking about the fire trucks that use Route 9 getting stopped.

19:36:51 From Scott Englander to Everyone : "just as adding capacity will increase traffic.

19:36:58 From Martha Davis to Panelists : Won't parking on just one side force more commercial patrons into the surrounding communities as they try to do u-turns, or park or get to the other side of the street in order to park close to their destination?

19:36:58 From GORDON BENNETT to Panelists : How about parking under the park and move all parking off the street?

19:37:08 From Brook Finity to Panelists : Love the green median for people that need more time to cross!

19:37:17 From David Gladstone to Panelists : Thinking of rt 9 boylston st Northeastern was very successful on impacting the flow but the byproduct of their design had parking being lost

19:37:20 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Scott, LOL -yes BUT having a reliable alternative with bikes, public transportation, walking needs to be accomodated

19:37:38 From Lynnae Terrill to Panelists : I think all of these options are wonderful for calming traffic and hugely improving the benefit to Brookline residents and folks visiting local businesses, not to mention protecting pedestrians and cyclists in this currently-dangerous corridor.

19:37:55 From Anne Sudduth to Everyone : Can you show the image with the four options shown graphically?

19:38:19 From Harvey Willson to Panelists : What about a swing lane east to west. in compliance with the direction in and out of Boston. like an HOV Lane down the middle..

19:38:33 From Scott Englander to Everyone : Cathy: Not necessarily. Regional traffic seeks other routes (like Mass Pike), people choose other options, as limited as they may be, and low-value trips are often eliminated.

19:39:00 From Harvey Willson to Panelists : direction would change with time of day in and out.

19:39:10 From Scott Englander to Everyone : ...A good local example was Longfellow Bridge during construction.

19:39:23 From Lynnae Terrill to Everyone : I think all of these options are wonderful for calming traffic and hugely improving the benefit to Brookline residents and folks visiting local businesses, not to mention protecting pedestrians and cyclists in this currently-dangerous corridor.

19:39:38 From Michael Sterling to Panelists : Generally I think these concepts look great. I think the first option without the median and two lanes was my preference but Iâ€™d prefer any of these over the status quo.

19:40:06 From Susan Kaplan to Panelists : The traffic finds other routes - back roads.

19:40:24 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Scott, BUT we want to keep more cars off Walnut St and other parallel routes that are residentialâ€¦ there already is excessive traffic on Walnut for folks wanting to avoid Rt. 9. How does Cambridge address this?

19:40:24 From Bryan Fuller to Everyone : If there truly no traffic increase, then two lanes seems to be the right answer.

19:40:33 From John Bassett to Everyone : The traffic volumes suggest that now a lot of traffic diverts itself to parallel neighborhood streets (Walnut and Davis) between Cypress and Washington. What ever is done should reverse this and get some traffic off Walnut and Davis and back on to Route 9. John Bassett

19:40:34 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : I am here Rep!

19:40:49 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : And I am very excited. This has come such a long way in a wonderful direction.

19:40:51 From GORDON BENNETT to Panelists : If to two lines .. can you make Davis one way out of town?

19:40:52 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Great, Frank, thank you for coming!

19:40:53 From Brook Finity to Panelists : I canâ€™t imagine less than 2 lanes in either direction (4 total).

19:41:15 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : This is Nika :) Does it say Frank? I think Frank is also here.

19:41:16 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : I just joined.I live at 55
Boylston Street. Last Friday at 9am I left my house. It took me 20 minutes
to get to Cypress Street. I was trying to go to Mission Hill and came back
on Walnut. It took me another 15 minutes to get to South Huntington.

19:41:49 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : This was a normal state of
affairs pre-pandemic.

19:42:01 From Deane Coady to Everyone : Hi Nika! glad you're with us and
advocating for us!

19:42:03 From Tommy Vitolo to Frank Mendoza, All Panelists : It says
"Frank Mendoza" is that you Rep?

19:42:10 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Kara - AND timing for cross walks

19:42:16 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Welcome, Nika! SO glad you
could join us! Yes, says Frank.

19:42:18 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : Yes it™s me :)

19:42:50 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : Also there is constant gas
leaking, and the road is under constant repair. I wonder if the planning
has included thoughts on facts that the road is constantly under slow
downs for many many reasons.

19:43:04 From T C to Everyone : does the designs provide solutions for
huge snow piles during the New England winter?

19:43:06 From Linda Pehlke to Everyone : CTPS= Central Transportation
Planning Staff! In house consultants to State transportation agency!.

19:43:39 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : I agree about HUGE snow
piles that keep on coming due to state highways.

19:45:00 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Monica, yes, the gas leaks
are something we did bring up during the visioning process. With the
climate legislation I hope we can tackle the gas leaks during the future
developments.

19:45:03 From Deane Coady to Everyone : lets have rain gardens so we can
save rainwater runoff - don't let it go down the drains!

19:45:14 From Bill Reyelt to Panelists : interested in how the current
traffic volumes compare to traffic volumes along Mass Ave in Central Sq
where I believe lanes were eliminated similar to some of the proposals
here

19:45:52 From Cynthia Drake to Panelists : For those of us who are not
familiar, please enunciate on acronyms so we all get smarter.

19:45:58 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : Talking about drains. Our
culvert is smelling strongly of

19:46:15 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : Turpentine like odors.

19:46:23 From Wyndsor DePetro to Panelists : I totally agree with upzoning
the area... without that you can make it the nicest pedestrian space ever
and nobody will use it because there will be no reason to use it.

19:46:28 From Crispin Lopez to Panelists : The question is about whether
the traffic lights can have a dedicated left turn signal.

19:47:29 From Monica von Huene to Panelists : Is the construction
disrupting old soil damage and making sure it isn™t escaping into the
ground?

19:47:36 From Anne Sudduth to Everyone : Yes to managing rain water with
green infrastructure beyond trees " the planted medians look great.

19:48:00 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Hey T C - we need to look how
melting equipment is used in Canada and possibly other urban setting like
NYC. (Its removed and melted off site.) The large piles are clearly in
conflict with pedestrian access.

19:49:43 From Wendy Machmuller to Panelists : Kara I see many questions in here about snow removal and pedestrian access, re to increased sidewalk widths

19:50:20 From Michael Sterling to Panelists : I don't need to ask live but I live nearby and fully support upzoning for housing and businesses as part of these changes.

19:50:40 From T C to Everyone : Good point/thoughts, Cathy Neal. As we often see worse traffic jam during snow days as the driving lanes got even narrower, considering with either of the new design options.

19:51:32 From Tommy Vitolo to Frank Mendoza, All Panelists : Did you consider a 2-way bike lane on the north side and no bike lane on the south? That might allow for consolidating a foot or two...

19:51:41 From Tommy Vitolo to Frank Mendoza, All Panelists : Sorry that should be fore everyone :)

19:51:48 From Tommy Vitolo to Panelists : Did you consider a 2-way bike lane on the north side and no bike lane on the south? That might allow for consolidating a foot or two...

19:52:41 From Wendy Machmuller to Panelists : Kara not sure if you can keep up with these, I'm having a hard time. Several Qs about snow removal/ped access

19:52:59 From Linda Pehlke to Everyone : I think we should only consider the concepts that increase the sidewalk width, this seems essential to me. Next essential element, trees.

19:53:08 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : Four trees in front of the Homestead hotel died this year. I am hoping thoughts about trees are long term visions. I do hope trees are included either way

19:53:32 From Wendy Machmuller to Panelists : Wendy F on text thread asks if we should skip survey results and refer them to our website

19:54:07 From Wendy Machmuller to Panelists : And stick with Tom's presentation. Maybe continue with Q & A we have so many

19:54:19 From Kara Brewton to Everyone : OK, that works for me!

19:54:21 From David Gladstone to Panelists : Looking for wider sidewalks would require possible further setbacks for new construction

19:56:44 From Scott Englander to Everyone : What Emily said!

19:56:57 From Lynnae Terrill to Everyone : Here here, Emily!

19:58:17 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : Snow removal on sidewalks has been far superior than in the past, but it is always better when Old Lincoln is in use.

20:00:48 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Monica, thanks for the observation on those trees. Yes, it is a precariously narrow area to allow trees to thrive and withstand the wintertime salt

20:01:45 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Thanks everyone for all of your comments!!! We are challenged to keep up with all of them and answer them, but we will save this chat thread so that we can see ALL of your feedback, questions, etc!

20:02:03 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : Snow removal on High Street up is one of the biggest problem areas, but also in front of Boylston park, and all of the South side of the street where the sidewalks are much narrower.

20:04:14 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : In the graphic I wonder what the overhang is? So

20:05:28 From Bryan Fuller to Everyone : thanks everyone

20:05:38 From Michael Sterling to Panelists : Thank you!

20:05:38 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone :
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/list.aspx> please sign up for NOTIFY ME via this link

20:12:36 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : Look how narrow the parking is. Sidewalks are also very narrow

20:14:52 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : There is an underground culvert running along the tracks that

20:16:35 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : Actually, sometimes we need some more pedestrian services here in Brookline.

20:18:01 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : This will keep you apprised of all of

20:18:27 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Two thoughts about commercial use:
1. Any "improvements" may make rents unaffordable to small merchants.
2. How can we justify more commercial when we already have numerous vacancies within Brookline Village @ existing storefronts @ "Cypress Crossing?

20:18:54 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : And @ Cypress Crossing

20:19:05 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : My apologies, please disregard. That was to say that the notify me link will keep you apprised of all future meetings and activities of this Committee

20:20:50 From Wendy Friedman to Panelists : Cathy Neal - we heard from both residents and business owners that there is untapped business potential in the area, but that improvements in access to local residents that would increase foot traffic needs to happen hand in hand.

20:21:11 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : This is not showing current construction

20:21:13 From Amanda Zimmerman to Everyone : We absolutely could use laboratory/biotech commercial here. Has the committee spoken with real estate experts who understand what the minimum density is to support office and/or lab space?

20:21:28 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Since we skipped the survey results in this presentation, please refer to our slides from last week's session to see our findings:
https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24756/Boylston-forum_Jun-2-2021

20:23:33 From John Bassett to Everyone : We do need auto related uses. Audy's garage provides valuable repair services.

20:24:42 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : I hope we are not thinking about a downtown Boston corridor like Brookline Ave at Fenway has become. It's Brookline.

20:24:51 From David Gladstone to Panelists : The front of Audy garage is owned by oil company and the rear building is owned by the Audy family

20:25:31 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : There were about 100 trees removed in the last few years

20:25:33 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Yes indeed, John. The Mobile station was considered a site to PRESERVE for the foreseeable future. Elias Audy is very involved in the work we are doing here.

20:26:14 From Lynnae Terrill to Everyone : I would agree that the height profile should increase to mimic the Madris building. Greater density of both residential and commercial use properties would go a long way to improving both the character and the usability of the area.

20:26:22 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : Thank you so much for the excellent facilitation, questions, and discussion. I'm especially

excited about greenspace, trees, bikes, affordable housing, and slowing traffic to stop at shops! - Rep Nika

20:26:34 From Frances Shedd-Fisher to Everyone : I keep hearing better uses for Mobil site from speakers.

20:29:23 From David Trevvett to Panelists : I heard about it through 3 mechanisms, this did not allow me to select 3 options

20:30:35 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Fantastic David. Multiple messaging channels works!

20:32:29 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : The Greater Point neighborhood spent many years dealing with keeping them smaller, not allowing a special use permit and I think denying them a variance which is why they still have a parking lot and as In understand are still keeping cars off site. One of the bidets concerns was about cars turning left and right off Cypress.

20:32:56 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Sorry them is the car dealership

20:33:20 From Luke Laverty to Panelists : Thanks for the detailed zoning response. Definitely appreciated.

20:34:57 From David Gladstone to Panelists : Incentives influence big businesses such as the Audi Dealership. Chambers is a business man and all decisions evolve around that.

20:35:31 From Hassan Makkeh to Panelists : Is there anything currently in zoning that prevents lab space at Brookline PPlace?

20:37:27 From Cathy Neal to Everyone : Frances - I think we need to acknowledge that 1. The Mobil is a locally owned business, 2. The number of service stations in Brookline has been reduced significantly in recent years,

20:37:37 From Wendy Machmuller to David Gladstone, All Panelists : David thank you for all of your comments from the perspective of the Chamber. We will be reviewing these more thoroughly!

20:38:11 From WyndSOR DePetro to Panelists : Lynnae Terrill, I totally agree that we should allow heights at lease up to the Madris building. More density and height will bring more redevelopment and make it economically viable to add mixed use properties with ground floor retail and residential above it. Mixed use development will activate the area and bring pedestrians in to use the improvements.

Brookline needs to drastically upzone the whole corridor not just looking at specific properties. This will encourage property owners like the UHaul owner to consider selling for redevelopment....

20:38:55 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone :
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24667/BSCSC-4-7-21-memo-to-Bulfinch>

20:39:07 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Bulfinch memo above

20:39:55 From John Motsis to Panelists : I thought Brookline did not want to look like the auto mile? Now that have installed car lifts? They do not provide enough parking for staff and park on our streets and take up parking for small businesses.

20:39:59 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Pam McKinney's market analysis: <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/19664/Brookline--Route-9-Market-Slides-June-25-2019>

20:40:18 From Deane Coady to Everyone : Thank you for the excellent work of this committee. I feel very well represented! I look forward to walking or biking or shopping along Boylston St.!!

20:40:51 From Wendy Machmuller to Deane Coady, All Panelists : Deane thank you for all of your feedback and following this from the beginning

20:43:11 From Mitch Heineman to Everyone : Auto-oriented businesses don't necessarily kill pedestrian-friendliness. There are car dealers and service along Comm Ave near Babcock, and Herb Chambers dealerships on Comm Ave and Brighton Ave. Keys are that they're small and not visually repellent

20:43:20 From David Gladstone to Everyone : Wendy thanks for all the committees work. I am approaching much of this as a local banker and secondarily as the President of the chamber and a long term resident of Brookline

20:44:27 From Scott Englander to Panelists : I agree with Linda P on form-based zoning!

20:44:41 From Scott Englander to Everyone : I agree with Linda P on form-based zoning!

20:45:17 From Bill Reyelt to Panelists : Whether or not the owner wants to take advantage of the associated opportunities, I would hope that we would not deny the owner of the Mobil site increased density / zoning flexibility they is under consideration for other nearby parcels

20:46:22 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Two parcels were combined at 221 + 229 to create one for the new 5 luxury apartments currently under construction. This was all in the works before we were able to mobilize this current

20:46:33 From Scott Englander to Everyone : Agreed, Bill. Automobile-oriented uses make the area hostile to people walking, and their parking needs result in very low tax assessments on a per-acre basis. I realize that some have commented in favor of keeping the Mobil station, but I think we need to be thinking about the future and something on such a key site that will enhance rather than deter walkability. While the site's owner may choose to keep doing business as-is for the near term, incentives for denser zoning (via overlay) on that site " consistent with those that may be proposed elsewhere in the area " would be more forward-looking, and would certainly not compel any change of use in the near term.

20:46:46 From Bill Reyelt to Panelists : agree whole-heartedly with Scott and Tommy's comments

20:47:02 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : I agree, with Mitch. I like the idea if having services that are meant for more mundane needs, not just gift shopping. That's what I meant by pedestrian.

20:49:38 From Hassan Makkeh to Panelists : Who controls air rights over the T-line? Could a developer build over the tracks for example to the east of the Brookline Village T-Stop?

20:50:05 From John Bassett to Everyone : According to DPW Commissioner Gallentine the Town has decided not to have a temporary Davis Path. The final bridge must be ADA compliant. This will take time an money. John

20:56:51 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : BHA presentation here: <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24708/BHA-ppt-5-10-21>

20:58:46 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : Thank you Kara, Wendy et al. I continue to learn a lot from you and from participants. Keep my office posted on how to support. Rep Vitolo keeps me very much in the loop as well. Would love to help with spreading the word in Precinct 5! (Rep Nika, listed here as my aide Frank ;))

20:59:09 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : One last time, our website here: <https://www.brooklinema.gov/1605/Boylston-Street-Corridor-Study-Committee>

20:59:29 From Scott Englander to Everyone : Given the skewed demographics of the survey respondents, Iâ€™d encourage the committee to do more outreach targeting under-represented groups.

20:59:42 From Frances Shedd-Fisher to Everyone : Thanks, all.

20:59:48 From Monica von Huene to Everyone : Thank you

20:59:53 From Frank Mendoza to Everyone : A pleasure!

20:59:54 From Scott Englander to Everyone : Thanks!

20:59:58 From Wendy Machmuller to Everyone : Thank you all!

21:00:01 From Hassan Makkeh to Panelists : thanks!

21:00:08 From Arran French to Panelists : Thanks!

21:00:29 From Harvey Willson to Everyone : Thanks,