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February 22, 2010

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Committee on Housing and Community Development held a meeting on February 22, 2010 with Chairman Rebekah Gewirtz presiding and Committee members Aldermen Walter Pero and Dennis Sullivan also present and voting. Also present were Alderman Maryann Heuston, Administrative Assistant Matt Dias, State Representative Carl Sciortino, Director of Transportation Michael Lambert, Ellen Reisnor from STEP and Wig Zamore.

### **Green Line Items:**

#### **Somerville Multi-Use Path**

Mr. Lambert told the committee that the mayor met with the city's state delegation to discuss the Green Line extension project and to discuss what future steps should be taken. A letter from the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) regarding the inclusion of the Somerville Multi-Use Path (Path) in the model assumptions was distributed to the members. Essentially, CTPS excluded the Path from the Boston Metropolitan Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) because its cost was under \$10 million, however, the Path is included in the 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement program (TIP). An analysis of the situation by CTPS indicated that excluding the Path in the travel demand model would have minimal impact on the demand at the proposed new Green Line stations, therefore CTPS chose not to delay the project by re-examining the various alternatives in the DEIR analysis. After requests by the MassDOT and the City of Somerville to have the Path included, CTPS has acquiesced and has stated that the Somerville Multi-Use Path Phase 1 would be included in the calculations of accessibility.

#### **Route 16 Terminus**

Mr. Lambert told the members that the response from the DOT was not to include the terminus because it would detract from the overall project. Representative Sciortino told the members that the state has been making undocumented claims that there is not enough support for the terminus and said that he is waiting for a response to a letter sent to the Secretary of Transportation requesting that all records pertaining to the terminus be released. Representative Sciortino told the members that the State Delegation and the mayors of Somerville and Medford are all asking that the analysis be completed. Mr. Zamore said that if the Route 16 terminus is in doubt it could cast doubt on the College Avenue terminus. Mr. Zamore cautioned the members by saying that the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) is a good resource, but in the end, they represent their own interests. Aldermen Heuston and Pero suggested involving the City of Medford in the process and asked Representative Sciortino if he could facilitate a meeting between the 2 cities.

The committee discussed sending a letter to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation in support of keeping the focus of the planning centered around the Route 16 terminus. Alderman Pero suggested that the terminus be referred to as the “Route 16 terminus in Somerville” as much as possible, since the property is located in Somerville. Mr. Lambert told the members that Secretary Bowles (of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs) has already told the city that he’s not interested in the Route 16 terminus, therefore, Mr. Lambert would rather have a New Starts application submitted in the fall.

Alderman Pero’s motion **that the Director of Communications draft a press release regarding the Board of Aldermen’s letter of support for the Green Line Extension Route 16 terminus, emphasizing that it is located in Somerville**, was approved.

**Maintenance Facility follow up:**

Mr. Lambert told the members that the state will release its preference for the location of the maintenance facility, at which time the city will be able to review the proposal. Both Mr. Lambert and Mr. Zamore believe that the state does not have a clear picture of the available options, as yet.

Alderman Sullivan’s motion **that the Administration provide the Board of Aldermen with any and all details relative to any and all options for the proposed Green Line maintenance facility, especially Mirror H and Option L**, was approved.

No papers were acted on.

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Alderman Rebekah L. Gewirtz, Chairman  
Committee on Housing and Community Development