



*Improvements to*  
**The Oak Allee  
at Poplar Gate**

**Community Briefing**

# MEETING RECORDING



*The Boston Parks and Recreation Department will be recording the meeting and posting to our project webpage for those who are unable to attend the Zoom meeting live.*

*It is possible that participants may also be recording the meeting with their phones cameras or other devices. If you do not wish to be recorded during this meeting, please keep your microphone muted and camera off.*

*Please share with your neighbors and friends,*

## **WEB LINK:**

*<https://www.boston.gov/poplar-gate>*

# VIRTUAL MEETING ETIQUETTE

*We want to ensure this conversation is a pleasant experience for all and that all community members/stakeholders are comfortable sharing their comments, questions and feedback.*

*Please be respectful and mindful of each other's time when asking questions/ providing comments, so that all attendees are able to participate in the meeting.*

*Keep questions/ comments project-specific and not personal to yield solution-driven discussion.*

*Please wait until all attendees have had the opportunity to ask a question/ provide a comment before providing additional questions/ comments.*

*You can always set up a conversation with **Kezia Ofiesh**, [kezia.ofiesh@boston.gov](mailto:kezia.ofiesh@boston.gov), to further discuss the project or process.*



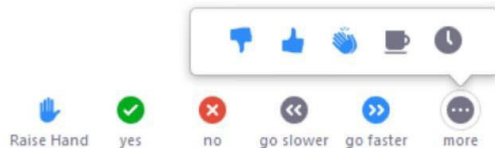
# ZOOM TIPS

Here is how you can participate during the question and answer part of the presentation.

## DURING THE PRESENTATION:



**VIA WEB:**  
Turn video on / off.



To use these non-verbal options click on participants (bottom of screen); these options will pop up in side bar.

## DURING THE Q&A:



### JOINING VIA PHONE?

Use \*9 to raise hand to ask for audio / video permission to ask questions or provide comments.



### VIA WEB:

Chat to ask questions / comments or provide responses to poll questions



Raise hand to ask for audio / video permission to ask questions or provide comments.



# AGENDA

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1

**PROJECT TEAM**

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2

**PROJECT GOALS AND SCOPE**

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3

**LISTENING AND DISCUSSION**

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4

**CLOSING REMARKS & NEXT STEPS**

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# PROJECT TEAM

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## **Kezia Ofiesh**

Project Manager

[kezia.ofiesh@boston.gov](mailto:kezia.ofiesh@boston.gov) or 617-961-3059

## **My'Kel McMillen**

Outreach Coordinator, External Affairs

[corey.mcmillen@boston.gov](mailto:corey.mcmillen@boston.gov) or 617-201-1294

## **Caroline Peters**

Jamaica Plain Liaison, Office of Neighborhood Services

[caroline.peters@boston.gov](mailto:caroline.peters@boston.gov)



The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University:

## **Danny Schissler**

Head of Operations and Project Management

## **Z Porter**

Associate Project Management

## **Rodney Eason**

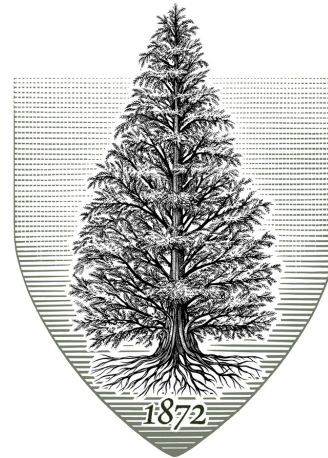
Director of Horticulture & Landscape

## **Kyle Zick**

Principal, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.

## **Yongjae Lee**

Associate, Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture, Inc.



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# CITY OF BOSTON PRIORITIES

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**A city that is:**

- **Delivering Exceptional Constituent Services**
- **Green and Growing**
- **Family Friendly**
- **Closing the Racial Wealth Gap**
- **Healthy and Safe**



# PARK & RECREATION GOALS

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- Accessible and available to all
- Diverse, balanced, and efficient mix of uses
- Meaningful and inclusive community engagement
- Adaptive and resilient landscapes
- Promote connections





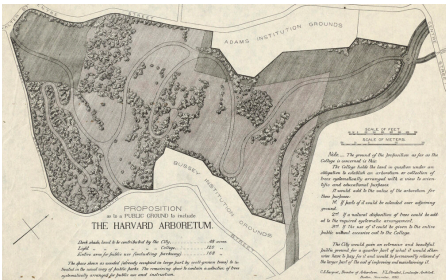
# A 1,000-Year Collaboration: Harvard and the City of Boston at the Arnold Arboretum

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Established in 1872 through a 1,000-year lease agreement, the Arnold Arboretum represents a rare public–private partnership.

- **Land Ownership:** The Boston Parks and Recreation Department owns most of the 281-acre site and is responsible for maintaining its infrastructure, including roads, fences, and utilities.
- **Management & Stewardship:** Harvard University manages the plant collections and overall landscape as part of its research and public education mission.
- **The lease terms:** \$1 per year, symbolizing a long-term commitment to shared stewardship and public access.

This collaboration ensures the Arboretum remains a living museum, research institution, and green oasis for the public.





# Entrance Improvement Project & Poplar Gate Renovation

The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, in collaboration with their design team at MVVA, is working to revitalize five key entrances, aiming to make them more welcoming, accessible, and historically grounded. The entrances included in this initiative are: Arborway Gate, Beech Path Gate, Walter Street Gate, Washington Street Gate, and **Poplar Gate**.

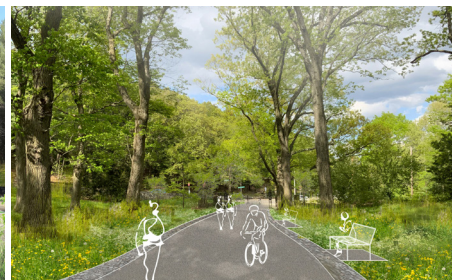
The new Poplar Gate is made possible through a generous gift from RoAnn Costin.

The goals of the design are to:

- Improve ADA accessibility, pedestrian safety, and bicycle access
- Enhance entryway plantings and expand planting areas
- Renew and restore historic infrastructure, including original walls and gate
- Protect and enhance viewsheds into and out of the Arboretum
- Improve wayfinding and add interpretive signage to enrich the visitor experience

Poplar Gate Timeline:

- Ground breaking August 2024
- December 2024 gate is temporarily opened for the winter
- Gate closed for continuing construction April 2025
- Gate to reopen later this month (June 2025)



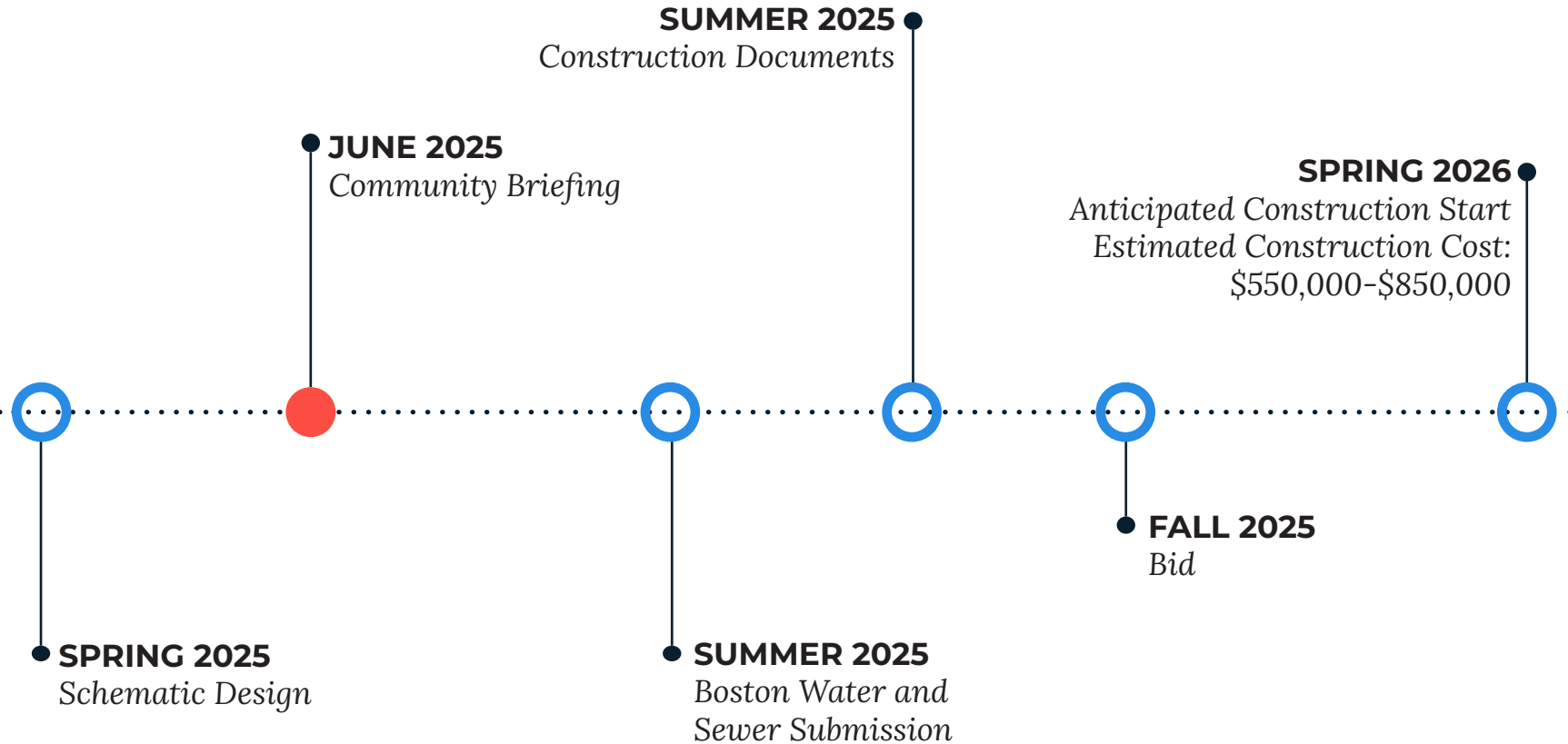
# OAK ALLEE DESIGN SCOPE OF WORK

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- **Repave path**
- **Restore cobble swales**
- **Protect existing trees**
- **Improve stormwater drainage**



# PROJECT SCHEDULE & FUNDING



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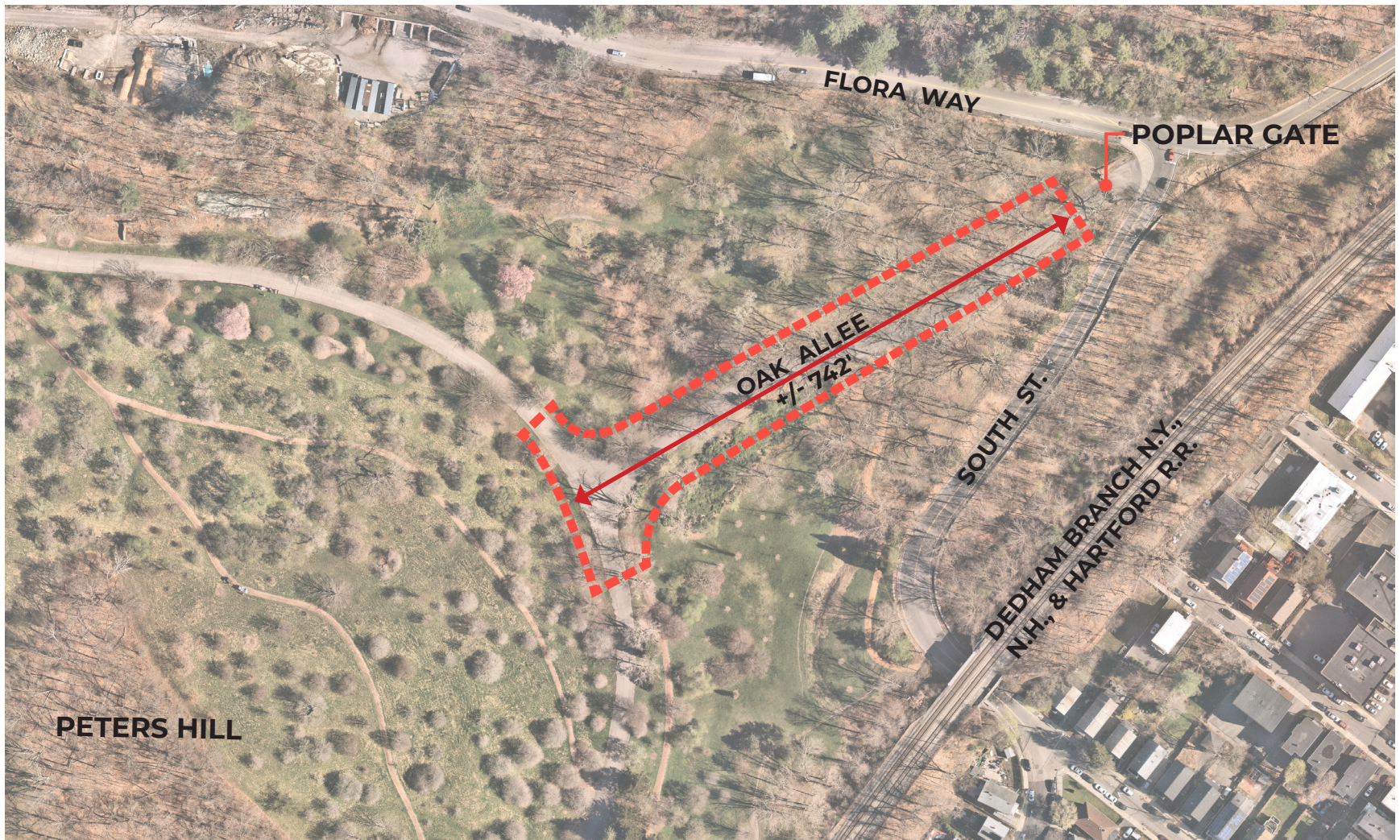
# OAK ALLEE AT POPLAR GATE -

## Project Area with Aerial Photo



Improvements to  
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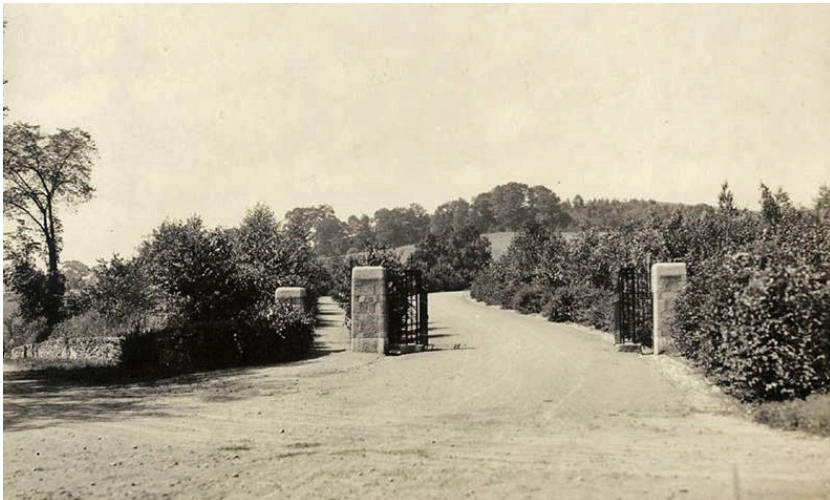




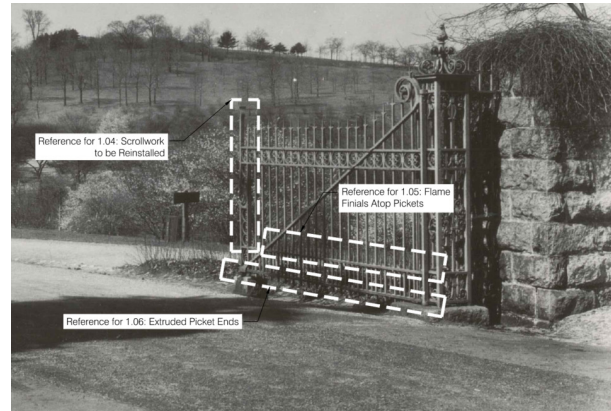
## OAK ALLEE AT POPLAR GATE - Project Area with Aerial Photo

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**POPLAR GATE AT PETERS HILL IN 1905**



**HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPH OF POPLAR GATE**



**POPLAR GATE AT PETERS HILL IN 2023**



**EXPOSED COBBLESTONE SWALE**



**EXISTING CLOGGED DRAIN**



**RESTORED COBBLESTONE SWALE W/ DRAIN COVER**

## **HISTORIC & EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOS**

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**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE, LOOKING EAST TOWARD BACK OF POPLAR GATE**



**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE, LOOKING WEST**



**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE, LOOKING EAST**



**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE, LOOKING WEST**

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOS**

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**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE, LOOKING EAST TOWARD BACK OF POPLAR GATE**



**EXISTING TREE NEAR ROAD EDGE-COBBLE SWALE VISIBLE**



**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE AT WEST END, SHOWING EXISTING FURNISHINGS**

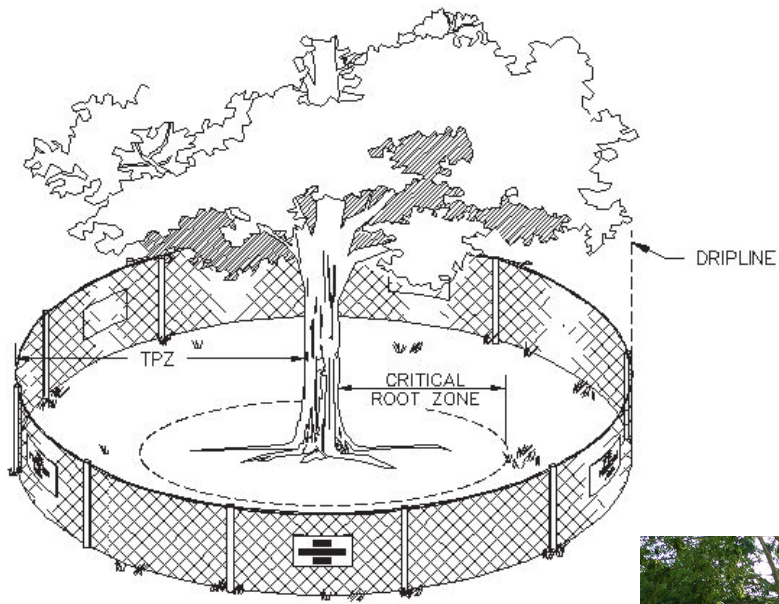


**VIEW FROM THE OAK ALLEE AT SOUTHWEST END**

# EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOS

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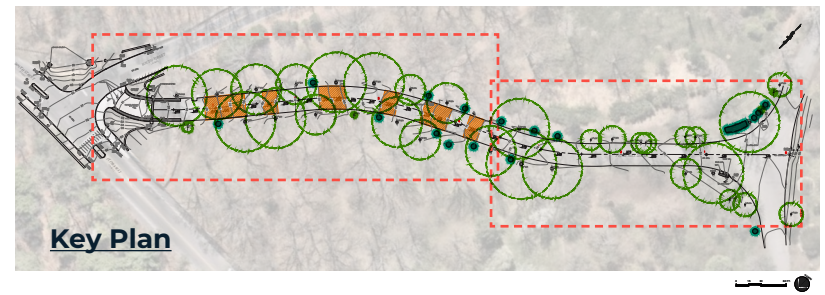
**EXISTING TREE NEAR ROAD EDGE**



**CHAIN-LINK FENCE AT ROAD EDGE FOR TREE PROTECTION**

# EXISTING TREE PROTECTION

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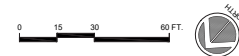


**STEEP SLOPE: >5%, TYP.  
(TOTAL ±165 FT. / 21%)**



**DRIP LINE, TYP.  
(TOTAL (35) EXISTING TREES)**

**EXISTING SHRUB, TYP.  
(TOTAL (17) EXISTING SHRUBS)**



## LEGEND



**STEEP SLOPES: >5%, TYP.  
(TOTAL ±165 FT. / 21%)**



**DRIP LINE, TYP.  
(TOTAL (35) EXISTING TREES)**



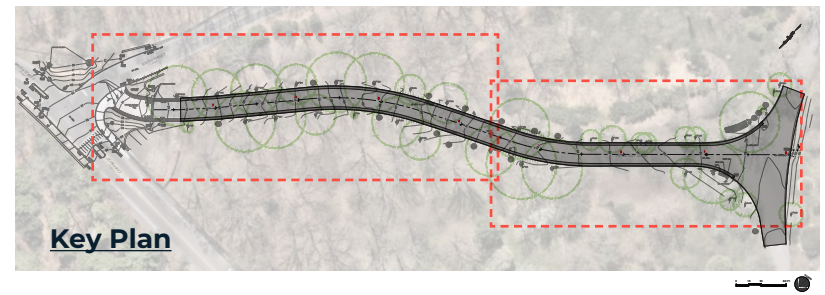
**EXISTING SHRUB, TYP.  
(TOTAL (17) EXISTING SHRUBS)**



# EXISTING SITE SLOPE CONDITION

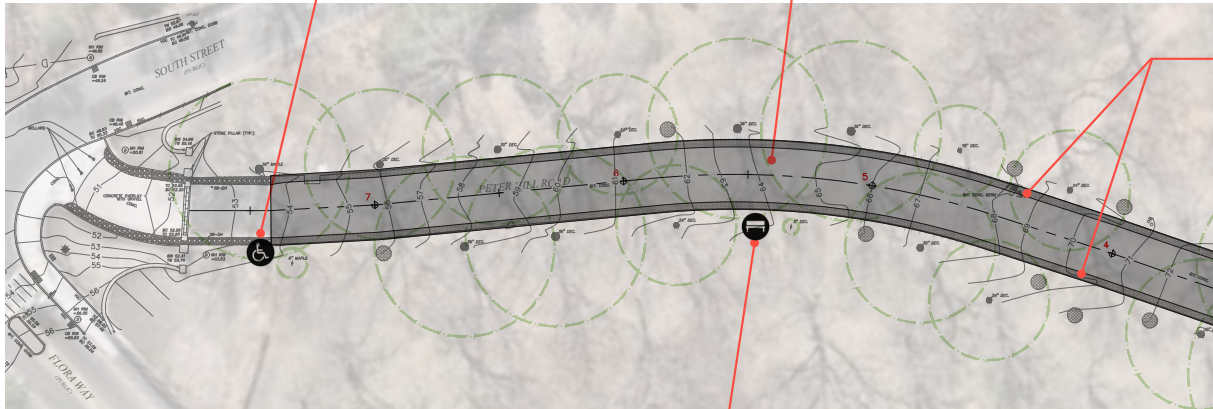
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**ACCESSIBILITY  
SIGN**

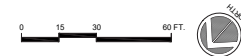
**ASPHALT PAVEMENT  
OR PERVIOUS ASPHALT  
PAVEMENT**



**COBBLESTONE  
SWALES**

**ARBORETUM BENCH;**  
level landing for  
wheelchair space,  
flatten cobbles in front

**ACCESSIBILITY  
SIGN**



**ARBORETUM BENCH;** level landing for wheelchair  
space, flatten cobbles in front

## LEGEND



**ACCESSIBILITY SIGN**



**ARBORETUM BENCH**



**NEW BIKE RACKS**



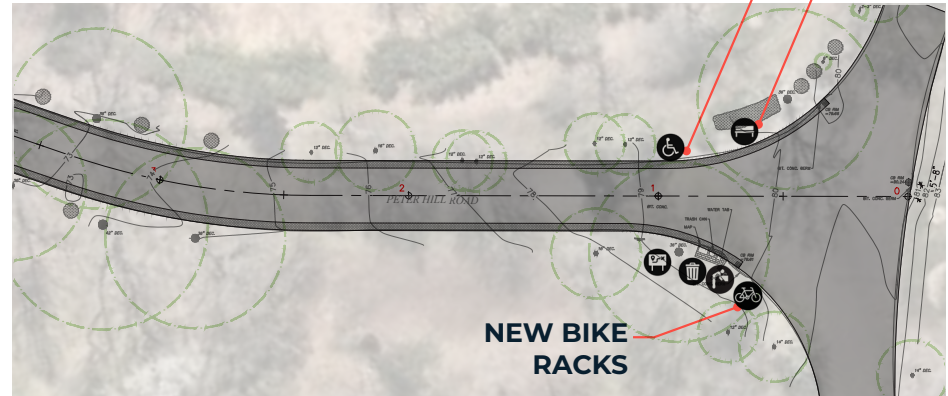
**RESET DRINKING FOUNTAIN**



**RESET TRASH BIN**



**RESET INTERPRETIVE SIGN**



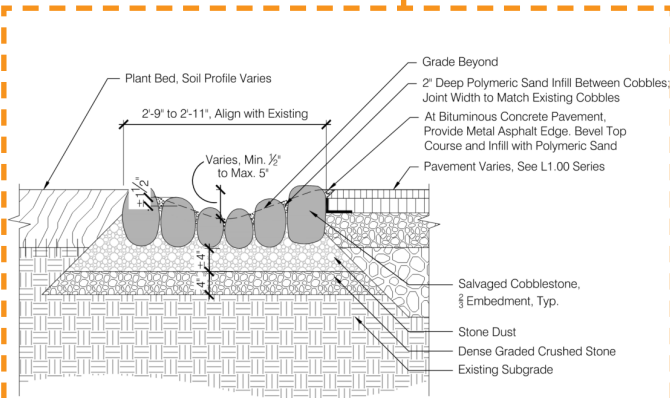
**NEW BIKE  
RACKS**

# PROPOSED DESIGN

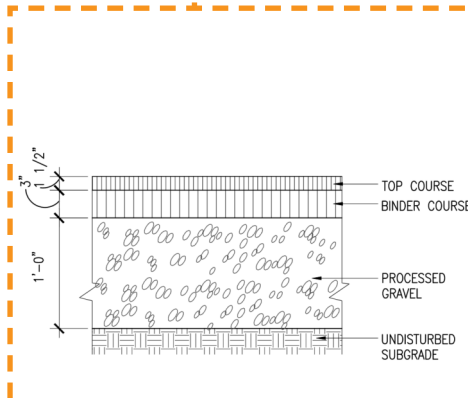
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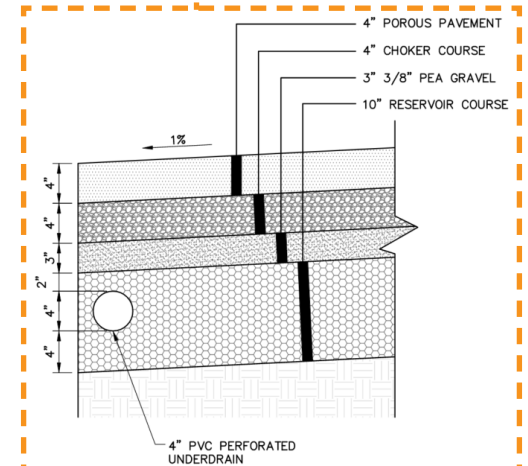
## Asphalt and Cobblestone Swale - Franklin park



**COBBLESTONE SWALE**



**ASPHALT PAVEMENT**

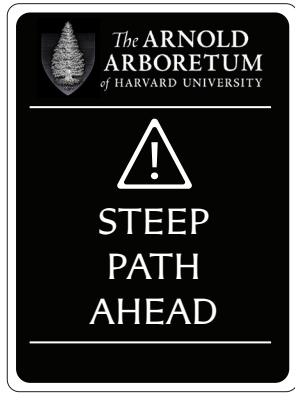


**PERVIOUS ASPHALT PAVEMENT**

**PERVIOUS ASPHALT ALLOWS RAINWATER TO FILTER THROUGH THE SURFACE AND INTO THE GROUND, REDUCING RUNOFF, FLOODING, AND EROSION. IT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND HELPS RECHARGE GROUNDWATER. HOWEVER, INCREASED SOIL MOISTURE CAN ATTRACT TREE ROOTS, WHICH MAY LEAD TO PAVEMENT LIFTING OVER TIME. PROPER PLANNING AND COORDINATION WITH TREE PROTECTION MEASURES ARE ESSENTIAL WHEN USING PERVIOUS MATERIALS NEAR TREES.**

# PROPOSED DESIGN

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**Steep Path Ahead Sign**



**Reset Existing Drinking Fountain**



**Reset Existing and Add New Arboretum Benches**



**Reset Existing Trash Bin**



**New Bike Racks**

## **PROPOSED DESIGN - Furnishings and Materials**

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# LISTENING & DISCUSSION

Help us build great parks.  
Let us know what matters to you.



# NEXT STEPS

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## NEXT STEPS

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- Construction Documents
- Boston Water and Sewer Commission Review
- Finalize MAAB Variance Application and send to Boston Disabilities for review before submitting to MAAB

## VISIT PROJECT WEBSITE

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### WEB LINK:

<https://www.boston.gov/poplar-gate>

Scan me with your  
phone's camera!

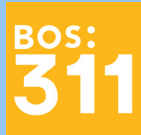


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# THANK YOU!

See the project website for future updates.

*[www.boston.gov/poplar-gate](http://www.boston.gov/poplar-gate)*



For questions, maintenance requests or  
concerns regarding any of our  
parks contact 311