



Jamaica Plain/Roxbury Transportation Action Plan *September 19, 2017 Public Meeting Summary*

Brookside Community Health Center, Kennedy Conference Room

This was the first meeting in what will be an approximately year-long process to develop short- and long-term transportation improvements in the Washington Street/Columbus Avenue Corridor area between Forest Hills and Jackson Square. At the meeting the City presented the scope of the initiative, outlined how it follows up from the PLAN JP/Rox process, and presented a summary of transportation improvements that are already implemented. A detailed discussion was held with the community after the presentation. The City also announced that it is finalizing the contract with the consultant who will assist on the project.

Approximately 44 people were in attendance in addition to City of Boston staff from the Boston Transportation Department (BTD), BPDA, and the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services. A representative from the MBTA was also present.

BTD started the meeting with a presentation covering the scope and geography of the JP/Rox Transportation Action Plan. At various points in the presentation the City took questions from the audience. The presence of a Spanish translator was noted for anyone needing interpretation services.

After the presentation, the community and City officials discussed the plan further, focusing on a few general areas, including the budget, ongoing infrastructure projects, PLAN: JP/Rox, working with other agencies, and potential Action Items.,

The City was asked what the budget was, and how it related to other similar Action Plans. The City replied that the budget is \$300,000, which is comparable to other initiatives, and will be adequate for a study area of this size and complexity. There followed a discussion of the traffic model that would be developed for the area; one constituent pointed out that these are expensive to build, and the more spent on fine tuning a traffic model means the less available to spend on other parts of the plan. The city mentioned that some intersections that are not in the study area will need to be studied as changes along Washington Street-Columbus Avenue could impact them.

Responding to the City's presentation on ongoing projects, constituents asked about whether the crosswalks already planned can be improved upon, and remarked on some complaints regarding MassDOT's Arborway Project. The City believes the crosswalks are based on best practices and that similar designs have been implemented successfully in other parts of the city but would also address them as part of the JP/Rox Transportation Action Plan. Regarding the Arborway Project, the City promised to look into who would be the best person to contact. *(Note that issue has now been addressed with MassDOT changing traffic signal timings as requested by the community)*

The BPDA's PLAN JP/Rox project came up as well. One audience member remarked that the increase in density permitted through the plan could increase traffic, while another



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mentioned that having transit-oriented development was likely to decrease traffic demand, as people who might otherwise live in Dedham or Needham do not have to drive through the neighborhood. Another constituent stated that PLAN: JP/Rox already made a lot of recommendations regarding bike lanes, on-street parking, lower parking ratios and slow streets, and stated that we should be using that as a baseline rather than relitigating these issues. Meanwhile another constituent argued that merchants would not necessarily be happy if the any removal of parking was recommended.

Finally, the City was asked why the planning processes were separated, to which the City responded that in fact the PLAN JP/Rox study did have a detailed transportation planning and that the current Action Plan was a recommended follow-up to set the stage for implementation.

Constituents asked whether the City would work with other agencies, such as the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), who controls the Southwest Corridor, and Boston Public Schools, who run school buses through the neighborhood. The City emphasised that working with other agencies including the MBTA and MassDOT is central to the plan.

Finally, constituents started talking about some potential Action Items. These included: pedestrian-oriented signal phasing; a bike path on Washington Street; a parking benefit district; bike connections outside the area, especially connecting all the way to downtown; and off-street parking utilization rates and ratios.