

August 24, 2012

MassDOT Board of Directors
RE: Casey Arborway project in Jamaica Plain

Dear members of the MassDOT Board of Directors,

As participants in the MassDOT Casey Arborway design process, we are writing to express our satisfaction with the project thus far and the overall engagement and responsiveness of the MassDOT design team to community input and concerns.

While no community process is perfect, it is clear that the state's team on the Casey has worked diligently to answer public questions, to consider the pros and cons of community suggestions and the design alternatives created from them, and to foster the best possible outcome.

As we approach the 25 percent design stage of the project, we are excited by the prospect of an at-grade solution that can stimulate the local economy, vastly improve safe bicycle and pedestrian access within the area, reconnect the historic Frederick Law Olmsted Emerald Necklace, and create a new gateway to the Southwest Corridor—one of our community's most treasured assets.

We also believe that in both the short and long term, the at-grade solution will reduce the environmental impacts associated with the roadway compared to current conditions and other alternatives. Simplified stormwater management, increased opportunities for planting, extension of the useful roadway lifespan, and the ability to “right-size” the design to meet changing traffic demands are potential strengths of the current MassDOT design plan.

Although we feel that this long and complex community planning process has been as complete, fair, and as inclusive as possible, we are aware that some members of our local community continue to find fault with the process, its outcome, or both. The best plans are born out of healthy community discussion and debate, and in our view, MassDOT has taken all reasonable steps to encourage constructive input from all viewpoints. In the countless meetings we have attended, MassDOT employees and contracted design staff have conducted themselves with professionalism and addressed the public with respect.

This planning process has demanded many hours of public commitment and over one million taxpayer dollars to reach this level of refinement. These resources have achieved impressive results. With funding-dictated planning deadlines looming, now is the time to commit fully to see this project through, and to spend valuable time

responding to important community concerns and needs that will arise during construction and the final stages of design.

We appreciate your support in making the new Casey Arborway a reality.

Sincerely,

Former WAG and current DAG members:

Nina Brown, Arboretum Park Conservancy (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Sarah Freeman, Arborway Coalition (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Bob Dizon, Boston Cyclists Union, (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Todd Consentino, Boston Cyclists Union, (Roslindale Resident)
Michael Halle, Boston Police E-13 Traffic and Parking Committee (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Sarah Kurpiel, Brookside Neighborhood Association (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Mary Hickie, Emerald Necklace Conservancy (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Dorothy Farrell, Jamaica Hills Association (Jamaica Plain Resident)
Kevin Wolfson, Livable Streets Alliance
Karen Wepsic, MBTA Rider Oversight Committee (Jamaica Plain Resident)
David Watson, MassBike
William Reyelt, WalkBoston (Jamaica Plain Resident)

Organization directors following the process closely:

Wendy Landman, WalkBoston
Pete Stidman, Boston Cyclists Union
Julie Crockford, Emerald Necklace Conservancy (Jamaica Plain Resident)