



October 8, 2013

John Fitzgerald
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

RE: Comments on the PNF for The Boston Garden project

Dear Mr. Fitzgerald:

WalkBoston reviewed the ENF for The Boston Garden project and submitted comments to MEPA, which are attached.

We support this project, which is superbly located to be served by public transportation, walking and biking. However, we have concerns about pedestrian access into and through the site which we would like to emphasize for you. These are:

1. Project entrance plaza and covered escalator entrance. A great number of pedestrian movements will be taking place in a single location on this site - at the project entrance plaza, which includes a covered escalator/stairway entrance to the MBTA commuter rail station and the TD Boston Garden. At this single location pedestrians will be passing through between:
 - The Green and Orange Line subway stations and the Commuter Rail Station
 - The Commuter Rail Station and TD Boston Garden
 - The Green and Orange Line subway stations and TD Boston Garden
 - Canal St. (used by downtown workers on foot) and the Commuter Rail Station
 - Canal St. and TD Boston Garden
 - Canal St. and the Green and Orange Line subway stations

We are concerned about the dimensions of this complex entrance and suggest a detailed analysis to explain its ability to fully, conveniently and safely handle the many pedestrian demands to be placed on it.

2. Causeway Street Pedestrian Crossings. The entrance plaza faces Canal Street, suggesting a strong connection that is anticipated to result from the pedestrian traffic that now uses that street for access between the commuter rail station and Downtown Boston. Canal Street is an attractive walk, and is lined with businesses that depend on this pedestrian traffic both daily and during special events at the TD Garden. To a lesser extent, Friend Street is also a potential magnet for businesses that attract walkers.

However, the pedestrian crossings at both Canal Street and Friend Street do not appear to be scheduled for traffic signals. We urge a detailed examination of both of these street crossings to be absolutely certain that traffic signals are not warranted, or to determine ways they can somehow be handled as part of the reconstruction of the portion of Causeway Street in front of this project. One solution would be to add a traffic signal that would coordinate with signals at Portland and Haverhill Streets so traffic would be held while pedestrians cross Causeway Street. At the very least,

details should be provided on the potential for street medians as resting places for pedestrians caught in vehicular traffic while crossing the street.

3. MBTA access. The commuter rail station adjacent to this site must be fully provided with pedestrian access from all sides of the project. We assume that the existing entrances on the east and west sides of the TD Garden building will be retained. We also assume that these entrances will be supplemented by a massive new entrance which focuses directly on the project entrance plaza and covered escalator entrance. Doors at this location are very likely to be crowded during peak hour use of the rail station, as the access provided at this location is weather-protected and likely to become very attractive to transit users who will welcome and all-season connection between subways and commuter rail.
4. Causeway Street and the Connect Historic Boston Bike Trail. The recent Connect Historic Boston plan and its funding point toward the need to integrate this project with the rebuilding of Causeway Street to incorporate these recommendations. All subsequent work on this project should include the plans that are being developed for this project.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to your responses to them. Please feel free to contact WalkBoston with questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Sloane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Robert Sloane
Senior Project Manager