



August 8, 2014

Secretary Maeve Valley Bartlett
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Attn: Purvi Patel
100 Cambridge St., Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

RE: Comments on the Single Environmental Impact Report for the Landmark Center Redevelopment
MEPA# 15183

Dear Secretary Valley Bartlett:

For large development projects around the state, WalkBoston provides a review of proposed pedestrian facilities and provide comments that suggest ways to help improve pedestrian conditions and/or mitigate negative impacts on pedestrians.

WalkBoston has reviewed the Single Environmental Impact Report for the Landmark Center Redevelopment. The project is designed to intensify the use of the property by relocating existing parking underground, and constructing 600 residential units, 185,000 sq ft of retail space, and 15,000 sq ft of office space. The existing Landmark building is preserved and circulation is upgraded on the retail level. Public open space will be augmented, and additional paths for pedestrians provided.

The project holds many positive improvements for pedestrians. The new connections between the MBTA station and the neighborhood, both inside and outside of the building are well done and very desirable. The new park at the corner of Park Drive and Brookline Avenue will provide a gathering spot and a “green” that will have multiple uses for people-watching or as an entertainment venue.

We have some suggestions that may improve facilities for pedestrians:

- The proponent might consider extending the weather-protected portion of the walking route along the new building frontage between the existing Landmark building and the north side of the property, including both the MBTA station and the multi-purpose path. Weather protection could be provided either inside the new building, as an extension of the interior network of pathways or by a canopy that would provide some protection for walkers across this small portion of the site.
- On page 1-7 the report cites the “...vibrant streetscape along Park Drive, Brookline Avenue, and Fullerton Street.” These three sides of the project warrant such attention. But the north side of the property, where the multi-use path is proposed to be located, has not been provided with attractive treatments. The walls and landscaping along this path be provided with amenities to make it more vibrant and attractive to walkers. For example, murals could be added on the adjacent walls.
- The proposed design for Fullerton Street is confusing. A connection for pedestrians is provided via Fullerton and Miner Street to reach Beacon Street from the development, but the extensive truck use of Fullerton Street may make this connection uncomfortable for pedestrians. The proposal to increase the corner radii at the intersection of Brookline Avenue/Kilmarnock Street/Fullerton Street should be carefully reviewed for its potential safety impacts on walkers.

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There is an important pedestrian safety issue that we hope the proponent of this project will undertake – improving pedestrian access across Park Drive at the top of the bridge where bus stops and the stairs to the Green Line are located. Two different improvements should be implemented.

1. By using the underground passageway adjacent to the MBTA D Line station a pathway along the MBTA right-of-way through the Fenway Station, would connect the Riverway portion of the Emerald Necklace to the multi-use path leading to Kenmore Square. This would enhance safety for pedestrians who want to walk between these two off-street paths.
2. An improved pedestrian crossing of Park Drive is needed at the top of the hill where the bus stops and access to the stairs to the Green Line are located. There is currently no crosswalk or signal at this location, and the hill reduces the visibility of pedestrians. As the location of a busy transit connection serving both Green Line and bus riders, this location warrants a careful study to develop safe crosswalks perhaps including a pedestrian activated signal or other high-visibility markings.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Sloane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert Sloane
Senior Planner

Cc Jack Murray, Commissioner, DCR
Jim Gillooly, Interim Commissioner, Boston Transportation Department