

walk

Boston

A NON-PROFIT
PEDESTRIAN ADVOCACY
ORGANIZATION

WINTER 2000

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WALKBOSTON NEWSLETTER

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Seaport District is preparing for explosive development.

Director Tom O'Brien said the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Seaport Master Plan will seek to limit as-of-right projects and ensure that 40% of development is housing. Participants are encouraged by the emerging emphasis on housing, open space, circulation/transportation, pedestrian streetscapes, reuse of the Old Northern Avenue Bridge, activation of the waterfront, and a reduced scale of development.

Other elements of the new Master Plan will include a new residential community along Fort Point Channel near Gillette with a pedestrian link to the new Convention Center, and a headquarters hotel for the Convention Center. An architect team—Raphael Vignoly and HNTB has been selected to design the new Convention Center and will have to hustle to meet the mandated opening date in 2003.

The MBTA has begun construction for the South Boston Piers Transitway. A dual-fueled electric bus will run from South Station under the Fort Point Channel with stops near the new Federal Courthouse and between the World Trade Center and the Convention Center, before heading further into South Boston or through the Ted Williams Tunnel to Logan Airport. The MBTA seeks to switch from the proposed 60-foot articulated buses to 40-foot vehicles, claiming that the larger capacity is not needed. They are also seeking to secure an easement for a transit route parallel to the existing Haul Road and railroad tracks in South Boston. A South Boston Transportation/Traffic Study is underway.

Currently a conflict exists between South Boston's desire to reduce the number of routes through neighborhoods and the traffic demand projected by Boston Transportation Department.

Fan Pier community representatives are encouraged by the latest Pritzker proposal - a 50% reduction in square footage and greater openness to its surroundings. Meanwhile, Massport is roaring ahead: the Seaport Hotel is open and construction proceeds on a new 20-story office building directly to the east. The Fort Point

Arts Community, spurred by the threat to artists' spaces in the South End, is exploring opportunities to develop another building in the district to provide long term security for working artists.

Central Artery construction continues. The Artery has begun public meetings on the few parks they are providing, mainly along Fort Point Channel. There is concern that their design and amenities will not be equal to those in downtown.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This newsletter celebrates WalkBoston's advocacy program. We have the most effective transportation advocacy corps in the region. Our members offer determination, perseverance, savvy, technical skills. We suggest and sometimes design good alternatives for ill-advised projects. We leave the world a better place.

At the top of the Boston Globe's editorial on January 1, 1999 — "victories worth remembering" were three WalkBoston projects: a seaport district plan designed for a human walking scale, preserving the 100-year-old Northern Avenue Bridge, and replacing a pedestrian bridge over Congress Street with street-level traffic calming improvements. The Federal Reserve Bank and abutters around Dewey Square at South Station express gratitude for their opportunity to design landscaped streets and brown-bag-lunch mini-parks outside their buildings.

Next year marks WalkBoston's 10th anniversary. We are reaching out and are receiving a heartwarming number of corporate memberships. Our new committees are active and will be a way to involve more of our membership. Thank you for your support, your advocacy everywhere.

Ann Hershfang



Our advocacy vital to saving old Northern Ave Bridge.

WalkBoston has successfully advocated to save the Old Northern Avenue Bridge. In the fall of 1998 the City of Boston announced plans to demolish the turn-of-the-century iron bridge, which is a vital walking link between the Financial District and the Fort Point Channel District slated for major development.



Old Northern Avenue Bridge — 1919

Responding to concerned calls from its members, WalkBoston volunteers took petitions to save the historic structure to the ceremonies opening the new federal courthouse on the Fan Pier. Despite the raw autumn day, WalkBoston was besieged with interest in saving the bridge. Locals, tourists and even lawyers attending the courthouse cer-

emonies love the old bridge, and willingly signed petitions. At a public hearing, held at Faneuil Hall two weeks later, over 30 people representing thousands of constituents got up and spoke eloquently in favor of preservation.

WalkBoston is pleased that the City of Boston listened to public opinion and is now taking steps to stabilize the bridge. To cover the cost of maintenance the City plans to seek commercial development near and possibly on the bridge. The Save the Old Northern Avenue Bridge Coalition, of which WalkBoston is a member, has asked to meet with the BRA, which oversees the development. We will ask them to specify that proposals guarantee public access and maintain views of the water and harbor. Other members of the Coalition include: Seaport Alliance for Neighborhood Development, Historic Massachusetts and the Architectural Heritage Foundation.

Your Name here
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WalkBoston promotes walking for transportation and recreation. Our mission is to create and preserve walkable, livable communities through education and advocacy.

mission

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walkBoston

take action

Walk Signal improvements

In the spring of 1998, WalkBoston was told that the City's new Walk/Don't Walk signal policy would be:
1. Automatic Walk with vehicle green
2. Keeping existing all-way Walks
3. Much longer Walk times.
Changes were to begin downtown. Since then, only 11 signals out of 750 have been changed. Official reasons for the stoppage are that BTD is too busy and has had some complaints about the 11 changed signals. Help by contacting: Andrea d'Amato at 635-3075.

Save the Northern Avenue Bridge

Please write to Congressman Joseph Moakley, Mayor Thomas Menino, and the newspapers. Public opinion is crucial to success.

hot tips

Boston Transportation Dept.

Hotline 635-4283
It's yours to use—so use it!

Biking and Hiking in Worcester

is a handsome new map published by the Office of the City Manager, Worcester. Call (508) 753-6087.

accomplishments

Massachusetts Pedestrian Transportation Plan 1998.

Our own Dorothea Hass assisted in this. The Pedestrian Plan can be downloaded from the Web at <http://www.wfa.com/pedplan>

walktalk

Of the more than 350,000 daily trips made entirely within downtown Boston an estimated 75% are exclusively walking trips

“Since I am a walker in Greater Boston and will be in DC as well, I am certain to support most if not all of your concerns.”

*US Representative Michael Capuano
—writing to walkBoston*

wish list

Advocacy Committee Co-Chairs(s)

Driver awareness/pedestrian safety advocates

MacIntosh computers no more than 2 years old

ongoing projects

Collaborating with BikeBoston to promote a reconnected Emerald Necklace Greenway from Franklin Park to the Charles River.

Collaborating with the Arborway Coalition in Jamaica Plain on traffic calming efforts

Creating commission to study 24 hour MBTA Service.

Clarifying law that requires vehicles to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks

Watching developments in:

- Fenway area and
- Mass Turnpike /Millennium Partners project

membership application

Complete this form & mail along with your check made payable to: WalkBoston, 156 Milk Street, Boston, MA 02109.
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name(s) _____

address _____

phone:daytime _____ evening _____

e-mail _____ fax _____

- check one: STUDENT / SENIOR OVER 70 \$10 SUPPORTER \$50
 MEMBER \$25 FRIEND \$100
 DUAL / CONTRIBUTOR \$35 CORPORATE \$250 | \$500 | \$1000

- circle committees you are interested in. (to contact them directly - see front)
- membership advocacy education/pr/publications
 legislative fundraising programs

Your donation is tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

America WALKs

Four new member groups have joined the America WALKs coalition: WalkSacramento, Bay Peds, Oakland Pedestrian Safety Project and Los Angeles Walks. America WALKs now has eleven member groups and more developing in Nashville, Honolulu, San Diego and Salt Lake City.

Co-founded by WalkBoston, America WALKs aims to foster the development of community-based walking advocacy groups for the purpose of educating the public about the benefits of walking and improving conditions for walking. Its goal is to have 100 member groups countrywide and a \$100,000 annual budget.

Shawmut Peninsula Walk

Colonial Boston, huddled on the small, hilly Shawmut Peninsula, was sometimes cut off from the mainland when tides were especially high. WalkBoston has now created the Shawmut Peninsula Map that shows the original Shawmut Peninsula superimposed on Boston's modern streets, with a walking route following streets that trace the original shoreline.

Points of interest are keyed to text and pictures. The map also indicates where T stops and public restrooms are located along the route. It is available from WalkBoston for \$4.00 for members or \$5.00 for nonmembers. Price includes postage and handling.