

Forest Hills Improvement Initiative

Second Community Meeting – January 10, 2007

DRAFT - Meeting Notes

FULL GROUP SUMMARY NOTES

The following notes are intended to be a summary of the full meeting and were in part compiled at the end of the January 10th community meeting:

EMERGING COMMUNITY VISION COMMENTS

- Draw people in while limiting traffic
- Specify traffic calming
- Emphasize that commercial uses should be close to the station; residential uses further out
- Transform Forest Hills Station (and Casey Overpass) from a dividing element to community connecting element with added gathering and linking functions.

FOCUS AREAS

Circulations and Access Improvements

Pedestrian

- Pedestrian Crossways - additional / improved cross circulation including through the station
- Re-establish Tollgate path and foot bridge
- Pedestrian connection across corridor at Walk Hill and Weld Hill to Washington St.
- Improve access to Station from the south
- Review current crosswalk locations; add missing crosswalks [add at Asticou St.]
- Make area more pedestrian friendly – kid friendly
- Shuttle from FH Station to JP attractions and destinations

Bicycle

- Added bike racks in district
- Provide secure and increase bike storage at FH Station
- Green Connector - way finding signage at bike path(s) to area green spaces

Vehicular

- One way vehicular circulation around station
- Traffic Calming
- Station Parking facilities located south of FH Station

Streetscape Improvements

- Consistent Street Lighting to link FH area, Washington St and South Street
- Improve Street Lighting for pedestrian and bicycle safety

Extend Southwest Corridor bike path – provide and off road bike paths on Washington St. and Hyde Park Ave.

Casey Overpass ground level improvements – Open air market / farmers market, pavilions (transparent), space for artists, sculpture garden, shaded green space or park.

New Washington Street uses & improvements – *see above*

Connect Area Open / Green Space Assets – Emerald Necklace Re-connector or green pathways for both pedestrians and bicycles on either / both side of Casey Overpass and surface roadways.

Extend Orange Line service – added stations in Roslindale / West Roxbury and Hyde Park

Add Retail in and on Station property – both in station and on station property uses.

STUDY SITES

MBTA Parcel U with ROW 3 and 4 [Hyde Park Ave.]

- Uses: Artist live / work, mixed use ground floor retail nearer to FH Station / residential further away, , affordable / homeowner housing, and open space (as is). And or relocate commuter parking.
- Size: Low rise - 3 to 5 stories
- Character: Brick row house / townhouse with parking at rear, gaps to allow views through and break up planes (street wall), green roofs, pedestrian path through, landscape buffer at ends.

MBTA Parcel V [Washington Street – small triangular site next to tracks]

- Uses: Tot lot, mixed use commercial with youth / recreational focus including ice rink, bike rental
- Size: Low buildings
- Character:

MBTA Parcel W with ROW 5 [Washington Street – large triangular site]

- Uses: Residential, affordable housing, retail, grocery store, school, park or playground
- Size: Low rise – 3 stories
- Character: sensitive to adjacent green space, cap or cover train yard to mitigate noise impacts

MBTA Station Parking Lot with ROW 2

- Uses: Mixed use office over retail, grocery store, gallery, commuter / structured parking
- Size: Low rise - 4 to 6 stories
- Character: Commercial district center with good pedestrian access and water feature

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- Uses: Mixed use retail with office and or housing above, movie theater, grocery store (Trader Joe's, pharmacy), mixed income housing, commuter / structured parking
- Size: Mid rise 5 to 7 stories, go high for residential views (Brigham Circle).
- Character: Commercial center, green roof, public spaces

Arborway Yard Parcel

- Uses: Mixed use commercial on front – office over retail, grocery store (Trader Joe's), small retail, youth recreation programming, ice rink, light industrial at back
- Size: 5 stories
- Character:

SMALL GROUP NOTES

The following notes were compiled during the small group breakout session:

GROUP 1

Emerging Community Vision Comments

- Draw people to area, but limit traffic
- Traffic calming initiatives
 - collect traffic information
- Address traffic configuration, flow of streets
- Station as “concierge” to area, way-finding signage
- Larger theme to develop urban design of Forest Hills project?
- Commercial around station, residential as you move away
- Take down overpass
- Central plaza- fountain, information booth

Transportation/Streetscape

- Green connector for area green space- some place for bikes to go at end of bike path
- Greenspace connection down Washington Street and Arborway Yard, streetlights
- Lighting to aid pedestrians and bikers
- Better access to arboretum from south of station
- Balance on both sides of station
- Blocks to and from Ukraine very long for pedestrians
- Add public space, benches along the blocks
- Bike racks
- Station should be pass through, not barrier
- Shuttle from station to connect JP attractions
- Other reasons for people to use the station- retail development
- Arteries 1 way on either side of station
- Marketing study for retail? Survey at T station?
- Weekend retail?

Casey Overpass ground level improvements

- Retail under overpass? (small scale like Post Office Square)

MBTA Parcel U with ROW 3 and 4

- Parking?
- Keep it as green space
- Brick row housing allows parking in the back
- Good location for artist live/work space
- More residential as we move away from station
- Low rise buildings- 3 stories max
- Mixed use- commercial 1st floor, office above
- Breaks in development- show views, break up planes

- Pedestrian walkway to connect U and V
- Footbridge

MBTA Parcel V

- Tot lot

MBTA Parcel W with ROW 5

- Grocery store!

MBTA Station Parking Lot with ROW 2

- Height- 4 stories max
- Grocery store
- Pedestrian access
- Water feature

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- 5-6 story development
- Retail at Washington Street
- Housing- Orchard Hill

Arborway Yard Parcel

- No Comments

GROUP 2

Emerging Community Vision Comments

- Reduction of traffic possible?
- Accommodate the flow of traffic
- Rotary around T station?
- Road widening for bike paths and access
- Concern about trolley tracks
- Bridges and walkways enhanced
- Green sustainable development- make this project a model for future projects
- Have anchor retail- support various needs
- Protect small business owners- affordability in new buildings is difficult

Transportation/Streetscape

- Connections through the station with retail within
- Connections to main business areas
- Signage/lighting- how do we emphasize that there's more than meets the eye?
- Shuttle from station to zoo and arboretum
- No crosswalks where you need them
- Not enough lighting
- Enhance dead space with artistic elements- installations, lights, streetscapes
- Recreation niches- handball, bocce, game sites
- Beautify, but integrate with businesses kiosks, police presence

- One way traffic around station
- Pedestrian connection at Walk Hill and Weld Hill

Casey Overpass ground level improvements

- Make it usable underneath maintenance, drainage problem now

MBTA Parcel U with ROW 3 and 4

- 3-5 stories over retail
- Green roof
- Landscape buffer

MBTA Parcel W with ROW 5

- Greenspace
- Parking
- Playground

MBTA Parcel V

- No comments

MBTA Station Parking Lot with ROW 2

- Retail with office or residential above

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- 4 stories
- Large retail
- Grocery or pharmacy

Arborway Yard Parcel

- Landscape buffer

GROUP 3

Emerging Community Vision Comments

- Knit Forest Hills back with JP commercial center
- Extend Orange Line
- Extend bike path
- T split up neighborhood- need neighborhood connectors
- Arborway as opportunity
- Greenspace near station
- Concern about equity- maintain social, economic diversity and limit displacement of businesses and residents
- Safety issues
- Places where homeless people could be

Transportation/Streetscape

- Shuttles to area attractions

- Zipcar
- Extend Orange Line and bike path to Roslindale
- Walk hill extension-too much traffic
- Predominantly green space
- Need retail, don't want empty
- Train station next to housing- encourage transit use
- Will TOD cause more traffic or promote use of T?
- How do you move cars out of there? underground road like Huntington Avenue, easier access to Rt. 203
- Green space near train
- Transportation hub, but cars are necessary
- Separate passing through people vs. residents- now people all use same traffic flow
- Minimize traffic with new development
- Make overpass less bottleneck
- Station needs improvement, cleaning
- Pedestrian friendly- kid friendly
- Green links to arboretum and parks

Casey Overpass ground level improvements

- How do you move cars out of there? underground road like Huntington Avenue, easier access to Rt. 203
- Use overpass as ????????
- Sculpture/public art path where stairs are
- Tiered fountain
- Sidewalks for pedestrians on South Street

MBTA Parcel U with ROW 3 and \$

- Affordable housing
- T parking
- 4/5 stories
- Market/retail at ground level
- Housing above

MBTA Parcel V

- Prioritize youth/mixed use
- Ice rink/bike rental
- Commercial
- Walking things
- Recreational
- Push carts

MBTA Parcel W

- No comments

MBTA Station Parking Lot with ROW 2

- Significant development
- 3-4 stories
- Parking
- Gallery/art center for youth

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- Trader Joe's, Whole Foods
- Like Alewife Station
- Get people from Arboretum to use farmer's market, pushcarts
- Institutional
- Dense development
- 3-4+ stories
- Housing over retail
- Parking above/below

Arborway Yard Parcel

- No comments

GROUP 4

Emerging Community Vision Comments

- Parking needed whether we like it or not, but not to detriment of streetscape
- Multi level parking=good, but not on ROW 1 (use underground ROW 1)
- Push Orange Line south
- Spread out parking issue

Transportation/Streetscape

- Pedestrian friendly- better crosswalks
- Bike friendly- racks needed, connect to SWC Park, connect arboretum to FH cemetery
- Arborway at South and Washington Street awful intersections – at least one should be pedestrian compatible.
- Pedestrian compatible.
- Bike lane along Hyde Park Avenue.
- Increase bike storage at station.

Casey Overpass ground level improvements

- No walls
- Open space
- Sculpture garden
- Skate rink? Pool?

Study Sites

- Indoor Pool
- Outdoor urban recreation

- Green space valued by residents
- All buildings must be attractive.
- Youth – pool, rink, skate board.

MBTA Parcel U

- Residential
- No retail – it will split business district.
- Retail will be a negative to area.
- All green/maybe pool.

MBTA Parcel V

- No comments

MBTA Parcel W with ROW 5

- Nice market
- Park above ROW 5 because it is out of the way.

MBTA Parking with ROW 2

- No wall of parking
- Parking below
- Underground parking with retail housing above.
- Retail surface, business 2nd, residential 3rd and 4th

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- Develop like Brigham Circle
- Go high for residential view of city
- No problem with making really tall for view.
- Residential/retail.

Arborway Yard Parcel

- Retail/housing.

GROUP 5

Emerging Community Vision Comments

- Amend community visions so it's not just about residents-appeal to commuters as well
- Encourage economic development
- Better job of youth outreach
- Severe traffic backup from Patten up to South Street
- Road condition/paving
- Mixed use not just transit hub
- Opportunities for youth- they are a huge user group of T
- Define community beyond Forest Hills- must embrace needs of Roslindale, Mattapan
- Job creation and business growth are part of economic development
- Hearty endorsement of green

Transportation/Streetscape

- Close Ascitou at Washington Street- continuous bike path in front of arboretum
- Green connector to cemetery
- Re-establish Tollgate Path

Casey Overpass ground level improvements

- Bad pavement conditions contribute to unpleasant experience
- Look at Amsterdam Central station & 59th Street bridge NYC for inspiration- space for artists, small businesses, all transparent- made a dead space lively
- Open air market
- Pavilions/captured space
- Green park/plaza

MBTA Parcel U with ROW 3 and 4

- Residential- concern about vehicle access
- Retail- food market
- Open space- preserve valuable views of arboretum
- Community gathering- farmer's market, etc
- Road across from walk hill connecting Washington St and Hyde Park Ave
- Cut ROW 3 & 4 making open space more viable
- Movie theater- opportunities for youth activities
- Townhouses
- Transparency in building design- knit together green vistas- ring of green space
- Don't make tunnel effect with tall, massive buildings

MBTA Parcel V

- Low commercial & housing with views- no walls- put parks in between

MBTA Parcel W with ROW 5

- Grocery store
- Park or playground
- School
- Valuable views of arboretum

MBTA Station Parking Lot with ROW 2

- Green
- Use grade change, good for parking structure
- Artist work space
- Communal space
- R1- multilevel housing- elderly/artist above commercial- 3 or 4 stories, affordable
- Plaza

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- Structured parking
- Mixed use

- Diverse commercial- movie theater, community space
- Green roof

Arborway Yard Parcel

- Largest place to accommodate youth recreation
- Commercial front on Washington- grocery ie Trader Joe's
- Recreational- ice rink

GROUP 6

Emerging Community Vision Comments

- Is there an existing city plan for area now or future projections? Review it.
- Scale of development height massing considered
- Affordable housing and rental units emphasized
- Vision statement needs to provide framework for assuring that future development meets community needs
- Look at private parcels with development potential for inclusion into this process
- Education and recreational youth programs/facilities instead of elementary school

Transportation/Streetscape

- Pedestrian access from station and south of station
-north up South Street -east to Washington Street/Arborway Yard
- Pedestrian crosswalk at Asticou Street needed
- How do we mitigate large volume of traffic through "hourglass"/bottleneck?
- Sidewalk improvements needed along Morton Street
- Add crossings over row between Hyde Park and Washington or move Ukraine south to new crossing
- Pedestrian crossing to Washington Street from Walk Hill.
- Improve pedestrian lighting and safety on Arborway (east of Station).
- Casey Overpass ground level improvements - add lighting, "uncreepify"

MBTA Parcel U with ROW 3 and 4

- Mixed use/mid rise- up to 5 floors- Total build-out?
- Parking?
- Possible parking garage to interrupt traffic coming north sooner
- Add lighting in new arboretum area across from station (anti-crime)

MBTA Parcel V

- No comments – similar to U and W.

MBTA Parcel W with ROW 5

- Community facility?
- Rental housing with affordable
- Meridian school

MBTA Station Parking Lot with ROW 2

- Office space? Retail?

Private Parking Lot (Fitzgerald Lot)

- Mixed use
- Parking (no net loss)
- Recreation/open space
- Mid rise
- Community center?
- Mixed income housing.

Arborway Yard Parcel

- Affordable housing- 2nd floor up to 5 floors and mixed use
- Green space-buffer for residential
- Youth programming
- Small business- retail on Washington
- Commercial/light industrial at back (Stonely Road)