

GROUP 1- Jim Fitzgerald / Chris Busch

General

- BRA must respond to community, not only developers
- Consider existing residents along the corridor

1. Use mix

- More retail & restaurants
- Increase mix of uses
- Encourage local businesses over chains (i.e. Roslindale Square, JP)
- Mixed new development
- There is not much room for new open space
- Affordability needs to be defined
- Number of affordable units affects nature of the retail

2. Physical characteristics

- Don't use VA as model (14 stories)
- West side is now a max of 6-stories (most are 3-4)
- Development should be consistent with existing buildings
- There should be view corridors to Olmstead Park
- Trees!
- Increase landscaping on S. Huntington
- Soften view of VA
- Improve light fixtures
- Improve quality issues for people already living here
- Gateway elements needed
- Micro park at triangle space of T turnaround
- More greenery

3. Transportation

- Green line weekend service is back but at reduced level
- MBTA is improving bus efficiency and stops
- More parking = more cars
- Can VA share parking?
- Extend Green line to Centre?
- Can street accommodate Green line extension, autos, bikes and parking?
- New developments at 161 & 105A are advertised as TOD (transit oriented development) – this will increase reliance on Green line and buses
- Provide bike access on east side of street to J-way
- Expand sidewalk on east side of J-way to accommodate bikes
- Crosswalk on J-way between Bynner & Route 9
- Pedestrian access to J-way would be nice
- For bikes “shared” lanes are dangerous
- Create dedicated Green line lanes?
- Improve traffic signals
- Increase stop light controlled mid-block pedestrian crossings
- Traffic calming options?
- Increased development needs increased transit
- New developments need to encourage transit use

GROUP 2 – Michael Cannizzo / Ted Schwartzberg

1. Use mix

- More retail and restaurants would be OK. Desire from current residents for more of these services to be within walking distance
- Extension of commercial character of Hyde Square
- More affordable housing. [Strongly emphasized by several participants]
 - Current policy should be changed to require 15% affordable units for all projects over 10 units
 - Affordability should be carried over when apartments are converted to condos, to ensure affordability in perpetuity
 - Are there planning tools for affordable housing, or just standard zoning?
 - The JPNC policy of 25% affordable housing should be used
- Affordable retail units
- When I say I live on Heath Street, people are concerned. There is already a lot of affordable housing concentrated in the area. It should be more mixed throughout the corridor. The southern end has enough.

2. Physical characteristics

- Visual permeability from South Huntington to the Jamaicaaway
 - Follow model of original development from 100 years ago: larger buildings that also have large spaces between them
 - Worry that space and light will be closed off, especially in the afternoons and evenings as light shines from that side of South Huntington.
- Footpaths, rights of way and sanctioned areas where walking between South Huntington and the Jamaicaaway is permitted
- Don't want the model of Boylston Street in the Fenway
- Rockport and Brookline offer desirable precedents for legally protected pathways and rights of way for pedestrians to connect to green areas, including connections over private property
- There should not be radical differences in height. Maximum 6 stories- no more than 2 stories height difference from adjacent buildings.
- No more than 60 units per acre
- Access to Jamaicaaway green spaces from the sidewalk on the south side of South Huntington. Perhaps this could be facilitated by a footpath or walking bridge.
- Sites of concern: Goddard House, 105 South Huntington, MSPCA, VA Hospital & Sherrill House

3. Transportation

- Street dependent traffic
- School busses back up traffic
- Green line issues
- Priorities and trade-offs:
 - Resident parking on secondary streets
 - Make Evergreen Street one-way because it is narrow
 - Remove on-street parking on South Huntington in select areas to create better rights of way and more efficient passage for green line and 39 bus
- South Huntington parking should be regulated with meters
- Improve South Huntington/Heath Street intersection
- Extend green line to Hyde Square, Perkins Street or Center Street
- More frequent 39 busses
- Resume pre-cut levels of green line service to Heath Street (including headways)
- Improve pedestrian corridor to Brookline Village
- Reconfigure off-street parking to improve bike lanes
- No left turns from Perkins Street onto South Huntington
- Right turn only onto South Huntington for off-street parking associated with new development on South Huntington

GROUP 3 – Marie Mercurio / Jonathan Greeley

When asked about their first impression of S. Huntington, one resident said “**bleak**” and others agreed.

1. Use mix

- For desired use mix, the group agreed on the idea of more ground-floor, pedestrian-level retail that could serve everyday needs such as a home store, local hardware store, coffee shop, bank.
- One area where some new desired small-scale retail could be is at the intersection of Heath and S. Huntington.
- Mixed use development should be encouraged.
- Any new uses should be active uses after 5pm into the late night to provide activity, added safety (eyes on the street) and options for different lifestyles.
- The first (northern) precinct of the corridor needs special attention (the stretch of S. Huntington from Huntington to Heath Street). There are unkempt and unmaintained buildings, vacant properties. Landlords and property owners should take greater care of their properties.

2. Physical characteristics

- Connections, including public spaces, should be made to the corridor’s assets.
- Streetscape improvements, such as conversion of old-style shoebox lighting to acorn lighting or other appropriate style, street furniture, street trees, would help to increase pedestrian activity on the street
- Historical markers noting significance of place or building would add to corridor’s history and identity
- Heights: Keep buildings at a moderate scale; nothing too high. Jamaica Towers example of trading off height for more open space was brought up. Group members were not in favor of development as tall as the Jamaica Towers and suggested that the open space doesn’t really feel available to the public or is noticeable
- If height is going to be greater than adjacent buildings, consider stepping back building height from the edge. Show some examples of this
- Group members were interested in future development having a street edge with breaks vs. a continuous street wall along the corridor

3. Transportation

Pedestrian: Think about raised crossings and other traffic calming techniques are needed, especially at the Heath St and S. Huntington Ave intersection

- Look into the Heath Station area layout.
- At the (northern) precinct, the sidewalks seem unnecessarily large. Suggestion was made to narrow the sidewalk to allow for a bike line
- Problem intersection: Huntington Ave. and S. Huntington Ave. for safety reasons (bikes, peds, vehicles turning left off of S. Huntington onto Huntington (towards Brookline)

Traffic: Because a left-hand turn onto the JWay from Perkins Street is prohibited (can only go straight or right), people use alternate Bynner Street which is backed up with traffic turning left, especially between 2pm-7pm. Pond Street is the only other street allowing a left turn onto the JWay along this stretch. Bynner has on-street parking, so with the added queueing, it makes it difficult for residents getting in and out of driveways on Bynner and general traffic flow.

- A group member proposed the idea of S. Huntington being a one-way street going northbound while the Green Line continued in both directions. He also suggested the JWay being one-way going southbound while moving truck traffic only to the JWay (very theoretical).

Parking: Parking is too far away from home and is awful to find.

- A suggestion for applying a residential parking permit program came up. The group talked about applying permit parking to the residential side streets off of S. Huntington while doing some form of regulation (i.e., one side, alternating) on S. Huntington. There needs to be a balance so the corridor doesn’t become unwelcoming for visitors/commuters, but some form of regulated should be tested.
- Group members were talking about lowered parking ratios to support walking, biking and transit alternatives to driving.

Transit: Expand Green Line to Hyde Square to open up access to more transit (closer to Orange, then connect with red)

GROUP 4 – John “Tad” Read / Jeong-Jun

1. Use Mix

More housing and services, such as restaurants and shops, to provide the type of amenities that would keep people close to home (don't need to go to suburbs).

Institutional uses—what should they transition to?

- Could focus of the central precinct on senior-oriented uses
- Mix of uses
 - Don't specify for a single one group (affordable, market rate). There should be a mix that includes all income groups.
- Patient family housing needed to support nearby medical and institutional uses (similar to Hope Lodge)
- Need for housing
- Add more shops to give liveliness, vibrancy (similar to Brookline Village)
 - Cross bridge from Brookline Village to S. Huntington & you sense urban decay
 - Brookline Village is lively
 - Would like to see more liveliness like Brookline Village
 - On street there should be shops, restaurants, etc.
- Bridge “Demarcation Point” between Brookline Village and S. Huntington
 - Brookline difference
 - Need for active ground-floor retail
 - Revitalization
- Need more attractive street level (storefront) uses where Huntington meets S. Huntington Ave.
- Stronger connections to the Jamaica Way
 - Safer, lit, shops, etc.
- Find more ways to attract people to the area:
 - Environment to retain students after graduation
 - Model: Harvard Square - Traffic at intersection of Huntington Avenue and Heath Street doesn't work
 - Needs to be redesigned; potential for plaza
 - Improved design could also improve circulation
- Could be a “major gateway” at intersection Huntington Avenue and Heath Street
 - But need better traffic management
- Strategic opportunities to reconfigure streets for public gathering spaces (Heath/Huntington)
- Integrate Back of the Hill Park into the neighborhood better
 - Use grade behind Back of the Hill for recreation
- If VA closes, have to consider future development there

2. Physical characteristics

- Other end of Centre Street (towards J.P.) provides a good example
 - Outdoor cafes
- Add street trees where there are none
- U-turn would be helpful (Perkins, etc). Bynner Street also
 - Create left-turn lanes
- Preserve older building character (i.e., Goddard Home)
- Delivery and trash pick up: should be moved from Huntington Avenue to alleys behind building
- Affordability considerations
 - Income mix
 - Greater depth of affordability needed (80 percent of median does not go deep enough)
- Note a lot of median income in area
 - Need a mix of high and low
 - Affordable and accessible housing
- Wide street boulevard “feel” suggested
 - Preservation of views (especially to Parkland)
 - Georgian architecture

- Brick
- Protect Emerald Necklace from being overshadowed by tall buildings
- Connection to Park
 - Safe connections across to the Jway
 - Bynner Street cited
- Remove telephone poles on Bynner to create more attractive connection to Jamaicaway
- Bicycle safety especially important at intersection of Huntington and S. Huntington Ave.
- Could be a “major gateway” at intersection Huntington Avenue and Heath Street
 - But need better traffic management
- Potential for a plaza at intersection of Huntington Avenue and Heath Street but there is too much traffic there now and current design doesn't work
 - Needs to be redesigned

3. Transportation

- Parking, bicycles (bicycle safety also)
- Tracks from Green Line are dangerous in the rain
 - Consider removing the tracks
- Heath intersection:
 - Consider extending Green Line from Heath Street to Hyde Square
 - Would open up the rest of corridor to additional development
- Sunday service return
- Vitality hinges on maintaining and growing public and private transportation
 - More public transportation
 - Less on-street private parking use
- Facilitating #39 bus
- Increase off-street parking to alleviate on-street congestion
- Need meters
 - Time limited for businesses
- Business success based on available parking
 - Centre Street example
- Increase in density to keep people there and increase street activity and vibrancy
 - People walking from Fenway
 - Design area to encourage people to stop, not just pass through-Explore placing tracks on center median
- Additional parking necessary for developments
- More density and shops means more people and a safer and more vibrant neighborhood
- More lighting