



March 18, 2014

Dear Friends,

On Thursday evening, March 6, 2014, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Lawrence & Lillian Solomon Foundation co-hosted a public meeting to present, and obtain public input on, a joint partnership proposal to reclaim 1.5 acres of parkland and establish a new landscaped path along a mile of the Charles River between the Eliot Bridge in Cambridge and Arsenal Street in Watertown. Linked to Herter Park in Brighton, this path would establish a two and one-half mile looped recreational pathway accessible to the some 80,000 residents within walking distance in Boston, Cambridge, and Watertown.

In addition to these benefits, the project's proposal to reclaim parkland and create a pathway by narrowing a portion of Greenough Boulevard, consistent with the recommendations of the Charles River Basin Master Plan of 2002 and the draft Charles River Basin Connectivity Study released earlier this year, would enhance public safety and improve the environmental quality of the Charles River.

At our recent public meeting, DCR and The Solomon Foundation heard numerous expressions of support for the proposal and also concerns, registered by a number of Greenough Boulevard neighboring residents, about the traffic impacts of narrowing the roadway. A preliminary traffic analysis performed by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., the engineering and design consulting firm contracted by The Solomon Foundation for this project, indicated a potential for increased queuing during a portion of the morning peak hour in a couple of locations and also that driving speeds would be reduced. To expand upon and refine this analysis, the firm will conduct further study in order to develop a localized growth rate considering potential redevelopment plans for Arsenal Street and the surrounding areas. This spring, after completion of the additional analysis, DCR and The Solomon Foundation will hold a second public meeting to share the resulting findings and recommendations and to provide an overall update on the project.

If you were unable to attend the recent public meeting or would like to further review the presentation given, it can be viewed at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/public-outreach/public-meetings/> or <http://www.solomonfoundation.org>. DCR encourages the public to submit comments on the proposed project through Monday, March 31, by emailing dcr.updates@state.ma.us, entering "Greenough" in the subject line, or by writing the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Public Outreach, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114.

We appreciate your interest and hope you will continue to engage in our public process as we endeavor to bring this key partnership initiative to fruition, reclaiming valuable parkland area, in a manner consistent with DCR's important conservation and recreation mission.

Sincerely,



John P. Murray
Commissioner

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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