



# Boston Public Works Department

## State Street Advisory Group Meeting Notes

February 6, 2020

GPI Project #: MAX-2017041.05

DATE PREPARED: February 7, 2020

LOCATION: Room 900  
Boston City Hall

The following notes summarize the main points of the discussion.

ATTENDEES: Greg Galer, Boston Preservation Alliance  
Brendan Kearney, Walk Boston  
Thomas Nally, A Better City  
Kevin Glynn, Rose Kennedy Greenway  
Ed Reynolds, Custom House Resident  
Ruth Raphael, National Park Service  
Suzanne Taylor, Freedom Trail Foundation  
Leah Miano, Harborside Inn  
Doug Gribbel, Broad Street Resident

STAFF: Para Jayasinge, Public Works Department  
Zach Wassmouth, Public Works Department  
Ashley Biggins, Public Works Department  
Stefanie Seskin, Boston Transportation Department  
William Moose, Boston Transportation Department  
Al Vilar, Boston Transportation Department  
Kennan Rhyne, BPDA  
Joe Johnson, GPI  
Carolyn Radisch, GPI

PURPOSE: Advisory Group Meeting

Ashley Biggins welcomed the group and provided introductions. Carolyn Radisch provided an overview of the State Street project, including the policy context, existing conditions and public input gathered to date. The meeting was then opened up to a general discussion.

### Discussion:

#### Greg Galer:

- The MBTA was recently before the Landmarks Commission. Coordination with that project will be important. The Commission will be interested in having the project retain the historic granite slab sidewalks.
- Resiliency will need to be considered into the design.
- Viewsheds of the Old Statehouse and the water are important.

- There was a concern that the data from the pop-up may have been skewed since drivers were not engaged. It was noted that the survey has been available online since the pop up (October 2019) in order to target a larger audience.

**Brendan Kearney:**

- Support the effort to improve pedestrian connectivity from the Greenway through State Street.
- There has been a concern of pedestrian safety related to the speed of vehicles taking a right turn from the Surface Road to State St.

**Tom Nally:**

- State Street is an important part of the east-west street network, can't see it working car-free, alternative routes aren't there.
- Survey didn't get driver input.
- Allocation of space diagram should consider the fact that cars require more space than pedestrians.
- The pinch point is a key component to this project.
- The sidewalk between Chatham and Merchants Row needs a lot of attention.

**Kevin Glynn**

- Need to consider resiliency – last winter high tides caused flooding.
- MBTA is accordingly making improvements to its headhouse.
- Greenway is looking at resiliency for its assets.

**Ed Reynolds**

- There will be a lot of competing interests for limited space.
- Important to maintain viewshed and historic context.
- Need to strike a balance for space.
- The fact that the Connect Historic Boston plan included State Street is important.

**Susanne Taylor**

- Love the Connect Historic Boston idea.
- Historically the water went up to the Old Statehouse – important for people to understand, perhaps this can be reflected in the design. How can we make people more aware of the history?
- Sidewalks are in poor condition.
- Many of the tour buses park along State Street for people that have accessibility issues and aren't able to walk.
- The intersection of Congress at State St is very congested w/pedestrians.

**Ruth Raphael**

- Pinch point is very difficult.
- Sidewalks in their current condition are scary.
- The street is not safe for all users.
- The historic factor is very important.

**Leah Miano**

- The old statehouse to the water corridor is amazing and a focus of the City.

**Doug Grabel**

- Concerned about no cars on State Street and where the alternate route would be in this scenario.
- Concerned about driver frustration and congestion.
- Need a balance between cars and other users.

**William Moose**

- Noted that the peak AM commuting hour was also during the time of peak deliveries.

**Para Jayasinge**

- Objective to design the street to be comfortable for all users, e.g. 13 mph. For example, Summer Street at Downtown Crossing – we got the design right on that street.
- Project would be at least two construction seasons.
- Want to make sure utility upgrades are done prior.
- Construction likely starts during the 2022 construction season.

**Meeting Times**

- It was suggested that there be a specified end time for meetings and we stick to that schedule.
- It was decided that meetings would be held on the first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm.
- The next meeting will be March 4, 2020.

Are there others who should be represented at these meetings?

Possibly Matt Scheidly of Revolutionary Spaces. They have a concept for the Old Statehouse / Old South Meeting House