

State Street Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Meeting held September 2, 2020 @ 5:30 PM

GPI Project #: MAX-2017041.05

DATE PREPARED: September 10, 2020

LOCATION: Videoconference via Google Hangouts

ATTENDEES: Greg Galer, Boston Preservation Alliance
Brendan Kearney, Walk Boston
Thomas Nally, A Better City
Ruth Raphael, National Park Service
Nathaniel Sheidley, Revolutionary Spaces
Suzanne Taylor, Freedom Trail Foundation
Tim Schlitzer, Pension Reserves Investment Management Board
Suzanne Lavoie, Wharf District Council

STAFF: Ashley Biggins, Public Works Department
Jim Fitzgerald, BPDA
William Moose, Boston Transportation Department
Kennan Rhyne, BPDA
Joe Johnson, GPI
Carolyn Radisch, GPI

PURPOSE: Advisory Group Meeting

This meeting was held via video-conference due to the social distancing guidelines set by the CDC in response to the Corona Virus -19 emergency. Ashley Biggins welcomed the group and provided introductions. Carolyn Radisch provided recap of topics discussed at past AG meetings and an update of activities over the summer.

1. The Phase 1 Pilot was implemented in June/July. GPI is collecting data on the pilot regarding traffic volumes and travel times. Use of the street has been impacted by utility upgrades which have resulted in disruption to the bike lane in particular.
2. The first online public presentation was conducted in July via a recorded slide presentation (on YouTube and linked on the City's website) with a linked online survey. Ninety-three (93) surveys have been returned to-date. Carolyn presented the results of the survey.
3. Carolyn reviewed project milestones for the fall, including ongoing AG meetings, meeting with an abutters group, and public presentations leading to a conceptual design by January 2021.

Discussion:

Discussion followed regarding ideas of how to generate more public input via the online survey. Several AG members volunteered to include a plug for the presentation and survey in their respective social media outreach (ie, newsletters). Ashley noted that the pilot was temporarily removed due to the anticipated protests over the weekend, so that aspect of the survey would not be relevant at the current time.

It should be noted that several members of the AG had not watched the presentation or taken the online survey. However, Thomas Nally indicated that he had seen the presentation and thought that it was excellent.

Suzanne Lavoie felt that the survey was geared toward the Healthy Streets program. She also felt that traffic has been much lighter and the pilot may not be representative of the pre-Covid conditions. She liked the wider sidewalk areas but indicated that the utility construction has been disruptive.

Nat Sheidley indicated that he felt there have been more bicyclists along State St during the Pilot. He also asked the City Team if any of the feedback received via the online survey has been unexpected. Ashley indicated that the feedback has been generally consistent with the project goals identified.

Tim Schlitzer indicated that he looked forward to the abutter meeting (to be scheduled) and requested that the online survey link be distributed as soon as possible so that additional responses could be gathered prior to the meeting.

Suzanne Taylor suggested that the online presentation and survey information be distributed through the Downtown BID and the North End News. She also volunteered to provide contacts to help gauge feedback from trolleys and Duck Boat Tours along State Street. She also said she could help with the distribution of loading surveys.

Suzanne Lavoie asked if it is anticipated that there will be one-way or two-way bicycle facilities along State St. Ashley responded that we are looking to provide a one-way facility at this time.

Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that the online survey was appropriate as-is and was distributed to the AG members by Ashley so that the members could distribute through their communication channels to a larger audience (Boston Preservation Alliance, the Greenway, Walk Boston, Revolutionary Spaces, Greenway Council). The Pilot Project was going to be reinstated so the current survey would be appropriate. Also, it was confirmed that the online survey had a link to the video presentation at the beginning of the survey to reinforce that the online presentation and survey were meant to compliment one another.

The next AG meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30.

Action Items:

- Ashley to distribute the links for the online presentation and survey to the AG members.
- Ashley to follow up with Suzanne Taylor to obtain contacts for the Trolley and Duck Boat Tours.