



March 21, 2012

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RE: **Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC)
Meeting Notes of March 14, 2012**

Executive Summary

On March 14, 2012, members of the City of Quincy team for the Adams Green Project appeared before the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) of the Boston MPO to provide a brief overview of the project. Following a brief introduction by Quincy Principal Planner, Kristina Johnson, a brief presentation was given and questions from RTAC members answered. The presentation was similar to the one given on January 11, 2012 to the Quincy Planning Board, but provided additional information on the progress of the consultant team's efforts and upcoming project milestones.¹

Overview of the Presentation

- Howard/Stein-Hudson (HSH) is the lead consultant for the City of Quincy's Adams Green Project. Other team members include Halvorson Design Partnership addressing urban design, Toole Design Group for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, and TrafInfo Communications for traffic simulation. The goal of the project is to develop the infrastructure that will allow the Adams Green Park to achieve its full potential as a green focal point for downtown Quincy and a contiguous public space connecting the MBTA station, City Hall, and the Church of the Presidents.
- Work on the Adams Green project takes place against a backdrop of recently completed and ongoing projects in downtown Quincy. The City's new high school has been completed and will serve as an anchor for an educational corridor in the downtown area. Funded by an ARRA grant, the Mayor Hannon Parkway has also recently been opened to traffic. Other projects in progress include the renovation of Old City Hall, Street Works, and an evaluation of the Quincy MBTA station.
- The goal of the Adams Green project is to create a contiguous public space in downtown Quincy that will connect Old City Hall, City Hall, the MBTA station, and the United First Parish Church around a new park the space for which will come from discontinuing the section of Hancock Street between City Hall and the United First Parish Church.

¹ Readers interested in seeing the presentation given at this meeting can do so at:
<http://www.adamsgreen.info/documents.html>.

- The idea of creating this new center for Quincy comes from a 2006 downtown master plan and is one of 3 core improvements associated with revitalizing downtown Quincy. Some elements of this plan are already complete or under construction such as the relocation of the Town Brook Culvert and a new access bridge over the Red Line tracks.
 - The project is funded through a federal SAFETEA-LU earmark that was originally intended to pay for construction of the Mayor Hannon Parkway. As the Parkway's construction was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) the federal earmark was repurposed for use on this job.
 - The projected timeline for the job is to have all design work completed by the fall of 2012 with construction beginning in 2013.
 - Traffic currently moves through downtown Quincy in a rotary pattern around the United First Parish Church. A major goal of the current project is to rationalize this pattern and make the roads in downtown Quincy act as a "Main Street." The new "Main Street" and the Civic Promenade that will replace the closed section of Hancock Street will act as the center for a revitalized downtown Quincy. McIntyre Plaza will become a new, green park space anchored by a bandstand. The overall new park space will provide individuals entering Quincy by transit with a more beautiful and coherent introduction to the city's downtown. Additionally, the changes will create a straight, intuitive pathway between the MBTA station and the new high school reducing the number of streets that need to be crossed along the way. The streetscape along Temple Street will be improved creating space for active storefronts.
 - The project limits of work include Dimmock Street, Hancock Street, and short sections of Adams Street, Coddington Street, Temple Street and Washington Street; however, the project team is studying 22 intersections across downtown Quincy to ensure that changes made in the city center do not have negative impacts on neighboring areas. This broader effort is being coordinated with the Street-Works project.
 - Recently completed efforts include the following:
 - Existing conditions traffic analysis
 - Crash analysis
 - Parking study
 - Cross section studies
 - Ongoing activities include:
 - Future conditions traffic analysis
 - 25% Design package, including plans, estimate, Functional Design Report
 - Streetscape design/interface with Adams Green park design
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Comments Received during the Q&A Session:

Members of the RATC asked several questions. These questions and their answers are summarized below:

Q: The two places I visit in downtown Quincy are the Adams Homestead and courthouse. Will you improve wayfinding in the area?

A: We are not quite to that level of detail yet, but we are considering an overall wayfinding plan that will stretch all the way up to the Neponset Bridge. We are working with the National Park Service on wayfinding specifically for the historic site.

Q: What are the biggest hurdles to closing the section of Hancock Street?

A: The biggest hurdle was the initial feasibility study done in 2010 to see if traffic would actually still work with a section of the street closed. Determining whether traffic would use the Hannon and Burgin Parkways and working that through with the City's traffic engineer was really the first big step.

Q: You seem to have done a good job thinking of pedestrians and bicycles. Have you thought about wheelchair access?

A: We're not into things like specific finishes for pavement yet, but we will be adhering to the principles of universal design, for example all main pathways will be concrete and everything will be ADA-compliant.

Q: I approve of everything you have here for bicycles and pedestrians. Thinking about emergency vehicles, would the promenade still be an arterial for them? The way you have things set up here it seems like you could add an extra ten minutes to their trips and those minutes can really count.

A: The plan is to continue to allow some vehicular access over the promenade. It will be needed for maintenance. The church will also need continued vehicle access for things like weddings and funerals. In an emergency, a fire truck would be able to get into the park area, but they would not use it as through street. Temple Street will become a two-way street and so there will be a new traffic pattern. We definitely won't be adding 10 minutes to a fire truck's trip through downtown.

Q: Have you given any consideration to Squantum Park and the seaside area?

A: The City of Quincy supports Marina Bay as a National Park site. We need a visitor center downtown, but there are also transportation issues between downtown and Marina Bay site to consider. We will keep working with the National Park Service to develop a coordinated program. We have a unique, public-private situation in the downtown Quincy area and are working with different funding to address each issue. We are fully funded for the park design. We have \$5.2 million for infrastructure and \$50 million in I-Cubed funding to revitalizing downtown.

Q: As with all parks, your initial concept is beautiful. What's the ongoing budget for upkeep?

A: The downtown district is set up in such a way that 50 cents per square foot of new or revitalized development that is rented goes into a fund to take care of downtown. Inflation is built into that.

Q: Is there room for a public-private partnership to do a downtown circulator trolley bus?

A: The National Park Service runs a shuttle from April to November. Throughout the year, Quincy is a hub for the MBTA's transit on the south shore. We have the Red Line, commuter rail, and buses to points all over the area.

Q: The dedicated 50 cents you mentioned, is that in the zoning regulations?

A: It's in the 121A agreement with Street-Works. That's the land disposition agreement.

Q: I've been working on the South Shore for 20 years and this is wonderful. I'd like to revisit some points made by BTM and CTPS on Quincy as a transportation hub. They have advocated that every subway train leaving Park Street Station is met in Quincy by a bus that will serve Weymouth, Hingham, Cohasset and Hull.

A: Quincy Center has 14 buses going to those destinations. That's an ITS² issue with the MBTA. We have a study ongoing now being done by VHB to look at the MBTA station itself as a catalyst for redevelopment.

Q: How has this been integrated with the Street-Works project?

A: We are working with them closely on the traffic part of this. The pace at which the Street-Works project advances depends in part on the market. Apartment and retail space is in high demand right now. The office space market is a little weak. At the moment we have a wellness center and luxury boutique hotel on the drawing board. We expect phase one of Street-Works to be done by 2016 but it's a long term project that will stretch out over, we expect, 15 years.

Next Steps

The next milestone in the public involvement process will be the second public information meeting to be held in the spring of 2012. This will be followed by the 25% design hearing.

² Intelligent Transportation System