Davis Square Streetscape Improvements

City of Somerville

Crosby/Schlessinger/Smallridge, LLC
Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.
HDR Engineering, Inc.

August 7th, 2012

Mayor’s Office of Strategic Planning + Community Development
Agenda

• Welcome – Rebekah Gewirtz
  Ward 6 Alderman

• Introduction - Sarah J. Spicer
  Senior Transportation Planner
  Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development

• Presentation - Deneen Crosby
  Principal/Landscape Architect,
  Crosby/Schlessinger/Smallridge
  Michael Tremblay
  Transportation Engineer,
  Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc.

• Discussion - Group Discussion, Question and Answer
Davis Square Streetscape Improvements

Schedule:

June 21st, 6 - 7PM: Project Walk Around
June 26th, 6 - 7PM: Project Charette
July 17th, 6 - 7PM: Community Meeting

August 7th, 6 – 7:30PM: Public Presentation and Discussion
Survey Results

Are you a Davis Square resident or visitor?

- 71.3% Residents
- 29.2% Visitors
Survey Results

How do you get to Davis Square most of the time?

- 67.5% Walk/wheelchair (pedestrian)
- 17.5% Bike (cyclist)
- 14.2% Drive (driver)
- 10.8% Bus (pedestrian + transit)
- 7.2% MBTA Red Line (pedestrian + transit)
Survey Results

Is there another means by which you frequently get to the square?

- Walk/wheelchair (pedestrian): 25.3%
- Bike (cyclist): 29.2%
- Drive (driver): 17.2%
- Bus (pedestrian + transit): 15.1%
- META Red Line (pedestrian + transit): 12.2%
Survey Results

What is your most frequent route to get into the Square?

- Community Path: 30.7%
- Holland Street: 24.1%
- Highland Ave: 17.5%
- Elm Street: 4.6%
- College Avenue: 17.5%
- Day Street: 0.7%
- Dover Street: 4.6%
Survey Results

What is your most frequent reason for visiting Davis Square? (please rank)

- Restaurants/Bars: 2.25
- Business/offices/shops: 3.06
- Public transit: 3.7
- Outdoor spaces/gathering spaces: 4.62
- Community Path: 4.75
- Leisure: 5.08
- Exercise: 5.97
- Schools, including Tufts: 7.50
- Other:
Survey Results

On a scale of 1 to 5, where five represents best condition and 1 the worst, how do you assess the existing condition of the Davis Square’s streetscape amenities:

- Streetlights: 3.0
- Bike racks: 3.2
- Newspaper boxes: 3.2
- Benches: 3.3
- Crosswalks: 2.9
- Sidewalk bricks: 3.0
- Landscaping: 3.4
- Wayfinding: 3.3

Davis Square Streetscape Improvements - August 2012
Survey Results

How concerned are you about the following issues in the square?

- Traffic speed (too fast)
- ADA access and sidewalk conditions
- Traffic congestion and traffic lights
- Bike safety / traffic
- Open space and place usability
- Signal timing for pedestrians
Survey Results

How important are the following improvements in your vision of the future Davis Square on a scale of 1-5?

[Bar chart showing various improvements and their importance ratings]

Davis Square Streetscape Improvements - August 2012
Design Principles

- Improvements to the Square will bring greater clarity, flow and safety to all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.
- Improvements will further expand opportunities to strengthen community use.
- Improvements will strengthen the identity of Davis Square.
Update from the July 17TH Meeting
Areas Identified as a Major Concern
Wallace, Winter and Thorndike Update

Reverse Direction of the Lower Portion of Wallace Street:

- Status – Under Study

- Benefits - Some Traffic Able to Flow Around Square Rather Than Through.

- Concerns – The City of Somerville had tried this Years Ago with Limited Success.
Wallace, Winter and Thorndike Update

Reverse Direction of Winter Street:

• Status – Under Study

• Benefits - Some Traffic Able to Flow Around Square Rather Than Through.

• Concerns – Need to Introduce a New Traffic Signal at the College Intersection.
# Winter Street/Park Avenue Functionality Comparison

## Winter Street EB (WB in blue)

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Davis Square Update

• Adjusted Curb at the Middlesex Savings Bank Allowing More Room on Sidewalk for Crossing.

• Added Bike Markings and Bike Boxes on College, Highland and Holland.

• Improved Signalization for all Modes of Transportation.

• Status – Recommended

Davis Square Update

Removal of Slip Lane in Davis Square from Highland to Elm:

- Status – Recommended

- Benefits – A Small Civic Plaza Space at Intersection and Eliminating the Unsafe Crossing Situation.
## Davis Square – Functionality Comparison

### Highland Avenue-Right Turn Lane

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Elm Street at Chester Street Update

Narrowing Traffic and Parking Lanes Along Elm Street:

- Status – Recommended

- Benefits – The Bus Stop Sidewalk And The Sidewalk In Front Of Diesel Café Can Increase In Width Reducing Congestion.
Elm Street at Grove and Russell Update

Removing Parking Lot Island to create a New Civic Space:

- Status – Under Study
- Benefits – Creating a New Civic Space and Entry to the Square Adjacent to Existing Restaurants and Buildings.

Concerns – Longer Wait Times for Turning onto Cutter Ave. Reduced Number of Parking Spaces Along Elm Street.
Elm Street at Summer Street Update

Proposed Option 1
Elm Street at Summer Street Update

Removing Parking Lot Island to create a New Civic Space:

- Status – Under Study

- Benefits – Creating a New Civic Space and Entry to the Square.

- Concerns – Leaving the Summer Street Spur Reduces the Plaza Size and Limits Connections to the New Plaza. Need to Relocate Parking Spaces.

Option 2
Elm Street at Grove and Russell Update

Proposed Option 2
Cutter and Highland Intersection Update

New Signal and Layout to Intersection:

- Status – Recommended

- Benefits – Improved Turning for Trucks onto Highland Avenue. Improved Crossing Condition for Pedestrians. Safer for Cyclists Turning onto Highland Avenue.

- Concerns – Removal/Relocation of Existing Parking Spaces at end of Cutter.
## Cutter/Highland Functionality Comparison

### Cutter St. Left-Turn Lane

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Grove and Highland Intersection Update

New Traffic Table at the Intersection:

- Status – Recommended

- Benefits – Slowing Down Cars and Allowing Pedestrians to Safely Cross Highland Avenue.
Community Bike Path Update

- Existing Bike Path Connection Through Square
Community Bike Path Update

Adjusted Path Around the Center of Davis Square:

- **Status** – Under Study
- **Benefits** – Helps Reduce Cyclist Congestion in the Center of the Square
- **Concerns** – Route is too Circuitous. Cyclists Will Still Travel Through the Center of the Square.

- **Possible Bike Path Connection Around Square**
Cyclists and the Bike Path Connection

- **Alternate Routes:**
  - Cycle track
  - Walk your bike option
Cyclists and the Bike Path

New Cycle Track in the Center of Davis Square:

- Status – Under Study

- Benefits – Shortest Distance Between the Ends of the Community Path.

- Concerns – Cyclists and Pedestrians May be in Each Other’s Way at the Crossing Areas. Cyclists Have to Wait Twice for Signals. Cyclists in Road Moving Against Traffic Flow.
Cyclists and the Bike Path

Walk Your Bike Path in the Center of Davis Square:

- Status – Under Study
- Benefits – Shortest Distance Between the Ends of the Community Path.
- Concerns – Cyclists Will Need to Get Off Their Bikes to Get Through the Center of the Square.
Materials Discussion

- Paving
- Site Furniture
- Lighting
Materials - Pavement

- Brick Pavement – existing limits
Materials - Pavement

- Special Pavement – proposed limits
Materials - Pavement

- **Special Pavement – 4 Alternatives**
Materials - Pavement

- **Special Pavement**
  - Wire-cut Brick Sidewalks and Plazas

- Benefits – Warm color, Traditional, Defines Davis Square, Wire-cut Brick Reduces Wheelchair Vibrations

- Concerns – Installation is Crucial, Brick Too Dark in Crosswalks
Materials - Pavement

- **Special Pavement**
  - **Concrete with Brick Accent**

- **Benefits** — Smooth Surface, City Standard

- **Concerns** — Does not Distinguish Davis Square from Other Areas in Somerville.
Materials – Pavement

- **Special Pavement**
- **Concrete Pavers**

- Benefits – Defines Davis Square as a Unique Area, Allows for Variety and Pattern
- Concerns – Installation is Crucial, Color Saturation is Less than with Brick
Materials – Site Furniture

• Existing
Materials – Site Furniture

- Existing
Materials - Cyclists Site Furniture

- Existing
Possible Site Furniture Families
Possible Site Furniture Families
Possible Site Furniture
Materials - Existing Lighting
Proposed Lighting

• Street and Plaza Lighting

• Special Lighting
  • Building Facades
  • Landscape
  • Pavement
  • Festival
Proposed Lighting – Street & Plaza

- **Alternative 1**

- Modern Lantern Style Street and Plaza Fixture
Proposed Lighting – Street & Plaza

• **Alternative 2**

• Modern Cobra Head Street and Plaza Fixture
Proposed Lighting – Street & Plaza

• **Alternative 3**

• Modern Cobra Head Street Fixture with Light Stick Plaza Fixture
Lighting – Building Facades & Landscape
Proposed Lighting
Proposed Lighting
In Conclusion

- Presentation Boards Discussion
- Next Steps…