

**North Massachusetts Avenue Improvement Study**  
**Public Meeting #3, 6/22/10**  
**Meeting Comments**

STREETSCAPE

- There was a comment that conflicts between bicycles and cars as well as between pedestrians and cars should be avoided. There was also a question regarding the process by which there could be physical changes on the Avenue e.g. bike lanes and crosswalks.
- The sidewalk angle at Goldstar Road was noted as an issue.
- Someone suggested that there could be some brick on the sidewalks.
- Someone commented that there should be more coordination with Linear Park crossing project e.g. signals, lights, streetscape.
- There was also a question regarding the schedule for the raised crosswalk at Cameron Avenue and signage for pedestrians and bikes.
- The catenary wires were noted as cluttering the streetscape and there was a question regarding possible alternatives.
- There was an idea shared that the MBTA bus drivers could be a resource to understand issues along the Avenue.
- It was mentioned that the signage on the Avenue should be improved and that the city should enforce existing rules regarding illegal signage. It was also noted however that there is too much of some types of signage and careful thought should be given about any new signs.
- Other suggestions included better signaling for pedestrians at Route 16 and a "Welcome to Cambridge" sign.
- It was noted that the lighting at night in Porter Square is a positive feature.
- There was concern about noise from the redline subway underground and it was asked if the City could contact the MBTA about the issue.
- There was a suggestion for a bus shelter at Churchill Street.

- There was interest in the plan for additional street trees along the Avenue. It was also noted that City support was important to keep the trees that are planted alive.
- There was a suggestion for Low Impact Development (LID) practices on the sidewalks.

## RETAIL

- There were some questions about the cost and methodology of a retail market analysis for the area, and also what is meant by encouraging retail.
- There were concerns about current barriers to retail and how to fill some of the vacancies on the Avenue,
- There was a suggestion made to use tax abatements for retail incentives.
- There was a specific concern about smoking outside of certain restaurants and the effect on the pedestrian environment.
- There was a question about plans for the former Marino's site.

## ZONING

- There was some discussion about whether increased residential and commercial density was needed on North Mass Avenue.
- Someone also stated that zoning should distinguish between automobile and non automobile related uses.
- There was a question about the kinds of space requirements that high end food vendors required.
- There were suggestions to require ground floor retail along the Avenue through zoning, as well as provide strong incentives, and or subsidized rents. Further, it was noted that that if there isn't more of an incentive for retail than there will be a gradual loss of those types of uses.
- Another meeting attendee proposed incentives for businesses to improve signage.

- It was also stated that insufficient parking lots deterred potential shoppers from Belmont and Arlington.
- Someone also reasoned that any parking eliminated as a result of outdoor seating could be a problem for the retail environment.
- Parking on Cameron Avenue in the evening was mentioned as an issue.
- It was also suggested that before allowing seating on the sidewalks the percent of space used and fencing issues should be considered.
- The former Long Funeral Home was mentioned as a historic building that had been compromised.
- There was a recommendation to look into locations where the BA2 zoning district extended more than 100 feet into the Residence B zoning district, particularly in the vicinity of Cottage Park.
- There was feeling expressed that there should be an opportunity for additional public input and more detailed discussions regarding any zoning changes.