Agenda

• Review Kiosk and Plaza Process and Design (25 minutes)

• Review Additional Safety Measures (20 minutes)
  • Changes to crosswalks, plaza, bike facilities, and vehicular travel lanes.

• Next Steps (10 minutes)
  • Harvard Square Neighborhood Association Sunday December 8, 2019
  • Historical Commission Meeting January 2, 2020

• Q & A and Discussion Groups (35 minutes)
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Project Background

In conjunction with the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group process, the City of Cambridge has been developing design concepts for renovating the historic Harvard Square Kiosk. The project involves carefully restoring architectural details, adapting for future use, and redesigning the Plaza to improve accessibility and enhance the flexibility of the space.

Public Process

In 2017, the City established a Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group to create a vision for the future use, operation, and governance of the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza.

The Working Group process has involved broad public input, including surveys, community meetings, pop-up workshops, and a Call for Ideas.

Based on this community feedback and regular meetings, the Working Group developed a set of recommendations for the future of this space in the heart of Harvard Square.

Summary of Vision and Recommendations for the Kiosk and Plaza

The Working Group envisions the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza to be flexible, dynamic, and welcoming community assets that enhance the everyday life of Harvard Square, act as platforms for community gatherings, including civic, artistic, and social activities, and attract and serve a broad range of people, including residents, students, visitors, etc.

The interior of the Kiosk would function as a flexible space accommodating permanent and temporary community uses:

- Permanent uses would feature a Visitor Information Center with displays focused on Cambridge history and happenings and the provision of news, brochures, and other materials.
- Temporary programming would occur inside the Kiosk and around the Plaza intermittently throughout the span of a typical week, which could include functions such as: small performances, historical exhibits, interactive installations, family oriented activities, voter registration, sampling of goods or services, and other entertaining, educational, festive, civic, and community-oriented activities.

“Original” Kiosk
"Original" Kiosk

Steel Windows - circa 1938
“Original” Kiosk - circa 1966
...all original material that remained after the conversion to a newsstand in 1983 should be preserved to the greatest extent possible, and that there should be no additional enclosure of the structure.

1983 relocation of kiosk roof & structure (photo credit: Boston Globe)

HALVORSON DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
**Kiosk Today**

- "Out of Town News" signage
- News stands, magazine racks & ticket booth
- Exterior suspended curtain tracks

**Interior**

- Interior casework & electrical room
- Select interior light fixtures
- Interior heating & cooling systems

**Exterior**

- Aluminum framed storefronts
- South elevation fenestration, vents, doors & ramp

**Present Day Kiosk - Exterior**
Proposed Kiosk

Key Roof Plan

1. Historic lights
2. Restored vacuum-formed signage
3. Accessible entry doors
4. Folding glass doors
5. Indoor/outdoor brick flooring
6. Historic windows
7. Restored south facade with signage
8. Digital signage

Key Floor Plan

View looking Northeast

HARVARD SQUARE - CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
31 JANUARY 2019

Touloukian Touloukian Inc.
Architecture + Urban Design
HALVORSON DESIGN PARTNERSHIP
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Design Proposal

Daily Uses - Visitor Information

Visitor Information

flexible storage with foldable tables and stackable chairs
Kiosk Sample Days

Performance Venue

Family Activities

Civic Functions

Social Seating
Folding Glass Doors with Operable & Historic Windows

- 1 awning window
- 2 visitor information casework
- 3 baseboard heat
- 4 historic windows
- 5 folding glass door
- 6 indoor/outdoor brick flooring
- 7 ceiling fans
- 8 accent lighting
- 9 historic lights
Character of the Place
BY REMOVING SOME OF THE “CLUTTER” FROM WITHIN THE PLAZA (WALLS, STAIRS, PLANTERS, LIGHT POLES, INFO KIOSK), A LARGER MORE FLEXIBLE SPACE IS POSSIBLE
EXISTING CONDITIONS

STEPS AND RETAINING WALLS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ADDRESS THE GRADE CHANGE BETWEEN MASS AVE AND THE PLAZA.
EXISTING ELEVATION
- UPPER
- INTERMEDIATE
- LOWER

NON-COMPLIANT ADA ACCESSIBILITY
- > 2% PLAZA SLOPES
- > 2% CROSS SLOPES
- > 5% RUNNING SLOPES

PLAZA IS SUBDIVIDED INTO THREE LEVELS LIMITING CIRCULATION AND USAGE

WEST SIDE OF KIOSK IS 6" HIGHER THAN EAST SIDE RESULTING IN A STEP DOWN OUT OF KIOSK

EXISTING PLAZA SLOPES ARE NOT COMPLIANT WITH CURRENT ADA/MAAB REGULATIONS
• Working with MBTA on permits.
• Waterproofing detail.
• Goal of bidding over winter / spring.
• Construction begin June 2020.
MassLive flipped into MassLive New

Harvard Square’s iconic ‘Out of Town News’ kiosk closes for good

masslive.com - Tanner Stening

The iconic news kiosk in the middle of Harvard Square is reportedly closing for good this week. Out of Town News stand in Cambridge, Massachusetts — a...

CultureHouse

EXTRA! EXTRA! CultureHouse is coming to Harvard Square! We will be popping-up in the Out of Town News Kiosk starting in early December with the support of the City of Cambridge.

CultureHouse Current

CULTUREHOUSE COMES TO HARVARD SQUARE

What Happens Next Will Shock and Surprise You!

CultureHouse has plans to return after closing its previous location in the City of Cambridge. CultureHouse is a non-profit that is dedicated to the arts and culture. The organization plans to open a new space in Harvard Square. Out of Town News Kiosk is located on the corner of Mass. Ave. and John F. Kennedy St. CultureHouse is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the arts and culture. The organization plans to open a new space in Harvard Square. Out of Town News Kiosk is located on the corner of Mass. Ave. and John F. Kennedy St. CultureHouse is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the arts and culture. The organization plans to open a new space in Harvard Square. Out of Town News Kiosk is located on the corner of Mass. Ave. and John F. Kennedy St. CultureHouse is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the arts and culture. The organization plans to open a new space in Harvard Square. Out of Town News Kiosk is located on the corner of Mass. 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It's ALMOST TIME! We are opening the doors to our Harvard Square pop-up on December 3rd at 12pm. That will kick off the Architecture Section, the first of five themed month-long "Sections" at CultureHouse Harvard. We will be talking about sense of place and how the built environment affects the way we interact with cities.

Our other Sections will be Housing, Arts, Ideas, and Environment. If you want to collaborate in any of these areas, send us a message!
over the building keys to a city official on October 31, 2019 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Staff Photo By Angela Rowlings/MediaNews Group/Boston Herald)
CAMBRIDGE, MA - OCTOBER 31: Mohammad Rahman, left, who has worked for Out of Town News in Harvard Square for 22 years, waits to turn over the building keys to a city official on October 31, 2019 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Staff Photo by Angela Rowlings/ MediaNews Group/Boston Herald)
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• Q & A and Discussion Groups (35 minutes)
September 17, 2019

Sharon Hamer killed in Harvard Square while crossing Brattle St.

After any pedestrian or cyclist fatality, staff review location.

With the Kiosk project about to go to bid want to prioritize any additional changes.

**COMPLETE STREETS & VISION ZERO**

*Complete streets* are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users – regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation (2016).

*Vision Zero* calls for the elimination of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from traffic crashes, and emphasizes that they can, and should be prevented (2016).
What about additional safety improvements?
Key Issues Identified

• Existing traffic patterns.
• Not clear crosswalk markings.
• Long crosswalk from Kiosk to Coop (43’).
• Multiple vehicular lanes.
• Awkward merge for cyclists and drivers going towards Porter Square.
What about raising intersection?

- Raised intersections typically used at non-signalized intersections for traffic calming.
- Doesn’t send clear message to people to wait for signal. Potentially encouraging peds to cross against the light.
- Not a square typical layout, radius. Difficult wayfinding for pedestrians with disabilities.
- With no curb reveal for this long section of roadway and on a radius, bollards and trench drains would be required along entire edge.
- Do not see this as a safer alternative.
Crosswalk Markings
Proposed Plan Slide

- Reduce travel lanes to 1 lane in each direction.
- Expand plaza area.
- Provide clear crosswalk markings.
- Shorten crosswalk from Kiosk to Coop (from 43’ to 34’).
- Reduce pedestrian delay with shorter cycle length.
- Eliminate merge for cyclists and drivers going towards Porter Square.
- Provide protected connection for northbound cyclists.
How do you eliminate the travel lanes?

- Reduce travel lanes to 1 lane in each direction.
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Traffic Operations

• Signal timing improvements
  • One lane for Northbound Mass Ave means that JFK and Mass Ave can move simultaneously
  • Reduce cycle length by 15 seconds during all time periods
    • Peak Periods – 90 seconds now, 75 seconds future. 8 additional pedestrian phases per hour
    • Off Peak – 75 seconds now, 60 seconds future. 12 additional pedestrian phases per hour
    • More frequent pedestrian signals reduce jaywalking
  • Coordinated signals on Mass Ave northbound
    • Holyoke Street -> Dunster Street -> Kiosk

• Traffic operations show minimal changes
  • Delay remains approximately the same as existing. Reduced delay on Mass Ave due to improved signal coordination
  • Queues are longer but will be processed during a single signal phase
What about closing Harvard Square to Traffic?

- 300 year old radial street network brought most major routes through Harvard Square
  - Cambridge Street
  - Broadway
  - Massachusetts Avenue (State Route 2A)
  - Mount Auburn Street
  - Concord Avenue/Garden Street
  - JFK Street
- Bus routes (66 and 86) and Harvard Shuttle.
- Diverting major streets is likely to have disproportionate impact on local streets in abutting neighborhoods
Summarize Improvements

- Reduce travel lanes to 1 lane in each direction.
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• Q & A and Discussion Groups (35 minutes)
Next Steps

• Reviewed with Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Committees

• Meeting tonight – get feedback.

• Harvard Square Neighborhood Association Sunday December 8, 2010

• Historical Commission Meeting January 2, 2020
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Q&A

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Extra Slides
PROJECT BACKGROUND

Guiding Plans
INTRODUCTION | BICYCLE ORDINANCE

On April 8, 2019, the Cambridge City Council passed a Cycling Safety Ordinance (12.22.) to support the City’s commitment to Vision Zero and the construction of a connected network of permanent separated bicycle lanes across the City.

Under the Ordinance, whenever improvements are made under the City’s Five Year Sidewalk and Street Reconstruction Plan, the improvements shall be consistent with the Cambridge Bicycle Plan. If improvements are made to a segment of the separated bicycle network, a permanent separated bicycle lane shall be installed along that segment.

Improvements do not include routine maintenance, repairs, restriping of the road surface, or emergency repairs to the surface of the roadway.
Vision Zero calls for the elimination of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from traffic crashes, and emphasizes that they can, and should be prevented (2016).

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users – regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation (2016).

Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance established programs to encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel (1992).

Cambridge Growth Policy emphasizes sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, biking and using transit and low-emission vehicles, which promote livability and help to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (1993/2007).
GUIDING PLANS AND POLICIES

In addition to Complete Streets and Vision Zero

Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance
established programs to encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel (1992).

Cambridge Growth Policy emphasizes sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, biking and using transit and low-emission vehicles, which promote livability and help to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions (1993/2007).