Today’s Agenda

• Welcome and Logistics 10 min.
• Introduction to Urban Design and Streetscape Design
  • River Street in Context 15 min.
  • Streetscape Design Toolbox 15 min.
• Public Art 20 min.
• Streetscape Dot Exercise 40 min.
• Public Comments 10 min.
• Next Steps 5 min.
Welcome and Logistics
NEW Expected Timeline

Issues & Opportunities, Existing Conditions

Conceptual Design

25% Design

2019

2020

J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J

Carl Barron Plaza Design Charrette

Public Meeting #1

Public Meeting #2

Public Meeting #3

Working Group Meetings

Public Walks

Today
Expected Timeline

Construction Process (2020-2022)

- 100% Design
- Construction Bids
- 75% Design

Public Meeting #4
Spring and Summer Schedule

New Working Group Schedule

- Working Group #4 Tues. 5/28
- Working Group #5 Wed. 7/17
- Working Group #6 Tues. 8/27

Other Spring and Summer Activities

- Mobility/Safety Walk: Tues. 5/14
  - Outreach at Riverfest: Sat. 6/1
  - Carl Barron Existing Conditions: Open House on Wed. 6/5 and outdoors on Sat. 6/8
  - Urban Design Public Walk: Tues. 6/11
  - Carl Barron Design Charrettes: Thurs. 8/1 and Sat. 8/3, outdoors on Sat. 8/3
Working Group Meeting Agendas

• Working Group #5 Wed., 7/17
  • Mobility 101
  • Interactive Exercises for:
    • Memorial Drive to Putnam Avenue and/or
    • Typical Cross-Section

• Working Group #6 Tues., 8/27
  • Draft Conceptual Design Alternative Progress
Ground Rules

- Phones off
- Keep an open mind
- Respect other opinions
- Speak, and let others be heard
- Read agenda and materials before the meeting
- Request agenda changes prior to meeting
- Help us stay on schedule
- Public comments during public comment periods
Building toward the design stage

IDENTIFY ISSUES
Define and analyze challenges and opportunities through perceptions and data

ESTABLISH VISION
What are our goals, in the context of existing planning & policies?

ITERATIVE DESIGN
Discuss and evaluate concept alternatives
Develop the final concept

IMPLEMENTATION
River Street in Context
**Definition of Urban Design**

*Urban Design* – A variety of strategies, techniques, and tools used to give form and function to space. A holistic, comprehensive approach to the built environment that includes every aspect of how a city is put together. It includes the design of streets, parks, and open space; plazas and squares; benches, lighting, and trees; circulation and access (how people move to and through space); and how buildings look and feel (aesthetics and scale) and how they bring life to the spaces between them (frontage and activation).

Images from *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch 1960
Urban Design on a Street/Corridor

Sidewalks, small plazas, and other public realm elements are small areas where many different functions and physical elements co-exist. There are a number of urban design considerations that need to be accounted for, including, but not limited to:

- the physical setting of the street
- environmental considerations (light, air, noise, exhaust, etc.)
- the safety and comfort of users (pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers)
- materials and texture
- uses or programming of adjacent spaces

This type of urban design work on streets and sidewalks is referred to as Streetscape Design.
River Street’s Existing Streetscape

• What are the existing conditions and site elements along the edges of River Street?

• How do these conditions vary along the length of the corridor?

• What qualities represent "human scale" and "vehicular scale" elements?
  • Human scale: size and shape that feels comfortable for a person traveling at walking speed to be near and use
  • Vehicle scale: size and shape that is easily comprehended and understood for people at higher speeds, allowing them to travel more comfortably at those speeds
Height and Setback Relative to Street Width
Human Scale

Example Attributes

• Comfortable at 3 mph (average walking speed)
• Small storefronts and spaces
• Small signs, medium font size, often at eye level or lower
• Many details
• People!

Example: Harvard Square
Vehicle Scale

Example Attributes

- Comfortable at 35 mph (River St speed limit is 25mph)
- Larger spaces, and buildings with large storefronts or little detail
- Large signs, huge font size, sometimes high overhead
- Few details (less motivation to slow down and see things)

Example: Alewife Brook Parkway
Understanding Human Scale and Vehicle Scale

River Street has a mix of human scale and vehicle scale attributes. Looking at different cross sections:

- What attributes do you see and where?
- Consider how River Street can become more human scale and comfortable for all users while still accomplishing its roles as an:
  - Infrastructure spine and
  - Regional roadway and
  - Neighborhood street and
  - Retail district and
  - Place to be and
  - Front yard.
Character @ Memorial Drive

- Vehicle Scale
- Human Scale

- Low detail on park wall and parking lot hedges
- Large signs
- Trees (high detail)
- Vehicle services, curb cuts, and storage
- People nearby?
• Vertical elements set back from the street
• Wall with few details
• No space for people to hang out along park edges
• Buildings setback far from street
• No vertical elements or other details along street edge
• No place for people to hang out along street edge
Height and Setbacks Near Whole Foods

Parking Garage
View @ Pleasant Street
Character @ Pleasant Street

Tall buildings, low setbacks, and active retail uses

People nearby?
Parked cars

Vehicle Scale
Human Scale
Heights and Setbacks near Pleasant
Edge near Pleasant

- Vertical elements set close to the street
- Detailed storefront
- Outdoor seating in adjacent lot
- Bike rack
- Sandwich sign at pedestrian level
Character @ Green Street

- Highway-like median strip
- People and crosswalks
- Trees (highly detailed)
- Vehicles

Vehicle Scale
Human Scale
• Lots of people provide detail
• Low detail on busway and business signage
What are our takeaways?

For example:

• River Street has a mix of characteristics?

• Character is more motor-vehicle scale toward Memorial Drive and more human scale after Putnam Avenue?

• High number of pedestrians at Central Square?

Do you agree/disagree? What else?
Streetscape Design Toolbox
Streetscape Elements

**Design Goals:**
- Safe
- Inclusive
- Human Scale
- Ecological
- Multimodal
- Activated
- Resilient
Where Streetscape Design Tools are Deployed:

- Curbside Flex Zone
- Curb
- Buffer Zone: Planting / Furnishing / Signage
- Pedestrian / Walking
Sidewalk

Pedestrian Walking Zone

Furnishing Zone
Bump Out / Curb Extension

One-Lane Street

Complex Intersection
Raised Side Street Crossing

Raised Side Street Crossing

Raised Side Street Crossing

Raised Side Street Crossing
Trees and Landscape

Streetscape Tree Canopy

Accent Planting
Trees and Landscape

Raised Planter

Raised Planter
Green Infrastructure

- Bioswales
- Stormwater Infiltration
- Expanded Root Zone
Trees and Landscape

Landscape Buffer

Landscape Space
Site Furnishings

City Bench
Standard

Conversational
Seating

Special Seating
Site Furnishings

Informal Seating

Informal Seating
Site Furnishings

Bike Racks

Bike Share Stations
Site Furnishings

Waste / Recycling Receptacle

Hanging Baskets

Planter Pot
Lighting

Vehicular Scale Pole Light

Pedestrian Scale Pole Light
Lighting

Special Lighting

Special Lighting
Artful Play Elements

Small Play Features  Informal Play
Artful Play Elements

Experiential

Fun
Signage

City Park & Sq. Signage

Wayfinding Element
Interpretive Features

Historic References

Cultural Connections
Small Public Spaces

Pocket Park

Pocket Park
Welcoming Connections to Adjacent Parks

Linear Path Connection

Protected Plaza
Bus Stop Areas

**Bus Shelter**

**Bus Signage**
Bus Stop Amenities

- Benches
- Bus Stop Curb Extension
- Real-Time Information
- Pavement Markings
Public Facilities

Public Restroom

Drinking Fountain
Discussion

• Other tools you think should be included?

• What have you liked/disliked about the toolbox elements that were presented?

• What challenges or unintended side effects do you see by utilizing these toolbox elements?
Public Art
Ritsuko Taho

- Former student and assistant professor at MIT
- Retired from professor role at Tokyo University of the Arts in 2017
- Often includes community participation and interactive features in her work
- Notable Work:
  - “Millenium Springs” 2006, Hollywood, Florida
  - “Rainbow Racoon” bridge, 2010, Tokushima City, Japan
“Multicultural Manifestoes”

- Installed in 1997 as part of current plaza design
- Includes glass towers, brass cylinders, and one bench
- Taho spent five months collecting “dream statements” via public meetings, workshops and “dream collection boxes” around Central Square, and inscribed them on brass cylinders
Committee Charge: Commissioning a public art piece to commemorate the dedication of women in Cambridge to passing the Nineteenth Amendment (August 26, 1920).

Location: Accessible, visible, connected to history, and space that would support installation.
CAMBRIDGE SUFFRAGE HISTORY

A long march for suffrage.

Map of short list of locations. Initial list of locations discussed at May 7, 2019 Meeting included 9 locations.

1. Joan Lorentz Park
2. Cambridge Crossing
3. Riverside Press Park
4. Norman M. Tubman Square
5. Cambridge Common
RIVERSIDE PRESS PARK

Riverside Press Park – 375’ x 303’
RIVERSIDE PRESS PARK

Pros:
• Near river.
• Large open space.

Cons:
• Not near major transit hub.
TUBMAN SQUARE – RIVER STREET

Norman M. Tubman Square – 75’ x 130’
Pros:
- Close to location of the Women’s Center.
- High visibility.
- Close to Central Square.
- Easily accessible.
- Will be fully reconstructed as part of the River Street project.
- Could be fully integrated into the redesign of the plaza.

Cons:
- Existing memorial marker to WWII veteran Lt. Norman M. Tubman (airforce navigator).
JAMES CRONIN PARK

Existing memorial – Example

Existing Western Ave Location – James Cronin Park – Franklin St & Western Ave
CAMBRIDGE SUFFRAGE HISTORY

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Overview map of short list of locations
Streetscape Dot Exercise
Streetscape Elements

React to precedent images to illustrate what you’d like to see.
Dot Exercise Guidelines

**Working Group**

- Break into smaller groups
- Each participant receives (3) dots in (3) colors.
- **Green** dots for images you really like.
- **Yellow** dots for images you are just okay with.
- **Red** dots for images you dislike.

**Project Team**

- Will help facilitate smaller group conversations
- Facilitator will capture key themes, likes, dislikes, takeaways
- Will use the feedback that has been received as a reference during the design process.
Tubman Square Edge Examples

North

Northeast
Tubman Square Edge Examples

Southwest

Southeast
Existing Tubman Square
What did we hear?
Public Comments
River Street Reconstruction

The River Street Reconstruction project will upgrade the sanitary sewer, stormwater and water subsurface infrastructure while developing a new surface design for River Street, the bus terminal area at River and Magazine Streets near Central Square, and Carl Barron Plaza. The project aims to create a streetscape design that meets the needs of all the various users and in a way that engages the local community, contributes to overall enhancement of the neighborhood, and meets the City’s goals related to infrastructure, transportation, and urban design.

The concurrent design of Carl Barron Plaza, the significant open space at the heart of Central Square will include consideration of public art, fixed and/or unified furniture, access, plantings and landscaping. The design must also consider the complexity of transportation needs related to the bus bays adjacent to the Plaza and people moving through the plaza.

The community outreach and design processes will occur throughout 2019 and into early 2020. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2020.

Click here to provide general comments and feedback.

Please use this Public Input Map to provide your input on issues and opportunities along River Street and in Carl Barron Plaza.
Upcoming events

• Carl Barron Plaza Existing Conditions
  • **Open House**: Wednesday, June 5, 6-9pm. Manning Apartments
  • **Outdoor Engagement**: Saturday June 8, 4-7pm. Carl Barron Plaza

• **Urban Design and Local Business Walk**: Tuesday, June 11, 6-8pm. Meet at Carl Barron Plaza

• **Working Group #5 Meeting**: *Wednesday*, July 17, 6-8pm at Manning Apartments
  • Transportation overview and toolbox
  • Interactive Design Exercises – transportation and open space
THANK YOU!

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