Working Group # 11

Thursday, May 6 2021
Welcome and Overview
Today’s Agenda

- Welcome and Overview 5 minutes
- Project Status and Schedule 5 minutes
- Corridor Design Feedback Recap | Key Themes 10 minutes
- Tubman Square Design 15 minutes
- Carl Barron Plaza Design 30 minutes
- Working Group Discussion 15 minutes
- Public Comment 10 minutes
- Next Steps 5 minutes
Expected Timeline

- **25% Design**
- **Gas main construction (Eversource) to end August 2021**
- **Public Meeting #3**

**2020**

- **J**
- **A**
- **S**
- **O**
- **N**
- **D**

**2021**

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

- **100% Design**
- **Construction Bids**
- **Public Meeting #4 (tent)**
- **Public Meeting #5**

- **Working Group**
- **Public Walks**
- **Today**

**Construction (City) 2021-2023**

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Working Group #11, May 6, 2021 – Slide 8
Upcoming Meetings

• **Public Meeting #4: June** (tentative)
  • Conceptual Design Plans for Carl Barron Plaza
  • Conceptual Tubman Square Design Update

• **Public Meeting #5: September**
  • Review of Final Corridor and Carl Barron Plaza Design
Goals for Today’s Meeting

1. Review key themes from virtual open house
2. Provide update on corridor design refinements
3. Review Tubman Square final design
4. Present and discuss proposed design concepts for Carl Barron Plaza
Corridor Design Recap
Virtual Open House

1,000+
Total Page views

~100
Total Comments
Virtual Open House

Support for:

- Separated Bike Lane
- Dedicated Bus Lane
- Landscaping
- Walkway through Tubman Square
- New Traffic Signals
- Improved Bus Stops
- New Crosswalks and Raised Crossings
- Shorter Crossings
- Creative Design
Key Themes & Locations

- Dedicated Transit Lane
- Landscaping & Street Trees
- Modified curb uses
- New Crossings
- Reconfiguration of Pleasant & River St.
- Bus Stop Enhancements
- Separated bike lane full length of corridor
- Raised Side-street Crossings
- Shorter Pedestrian Crossings
Corridor Refinements Near Tubman Square

- Adjusted Curb Ramp and Crosswalk Alignment
- Crosswalk Consolidation at Pleasant Street
- Adjusted Alignment of Bikeway at Entry into Tubman Square
- Confirmed Locations of RRFB's Along the Corridor

Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)
Tubman Square Design Guidance

Design Guidance

- Safe, separated bike lane
- Incorporate feature to unify elongated plaza
- Maximize planted area for enclosure/comfort
- Locate Ritsuko Taho art element and incorporate cherry trees
- Incorporate sculptural/playful elements
Tubman Square Elements

- Crosswalk
- Separated Bikeway (typ.)
- Sidewalk (typ.)
- Play/seating elements
- Cherry Trees
- Cross Connection for Bikes/ Maintenance Vehicles
- Planting Areas
- Focal/Unifying Seat Wall w/ Backrests in Various Locations
- Tubman Plaque
- Bike Racks
- Bus Stop
- Ritsuko Taho Art Element
Tubman Square – Looking East
Tubman Square – Looking West
Tubman Square – Looking West
Questions?
Shared Design Goals Review

Inclusive  
Attract a wide range of users while preserving usability for the existing regulars

Activated  
Create a vibrant space through everyday activities and special programming

Safe  
Create a feeling of safety for everyone

Flexible  
Allow for a wide range of uses and activities that can evolve over time

Attractive  
Improve the perception of the space

Comfortable  
Provide seating, lighting and amenities that promote short- and long-term lingering

Multimodal  
Ensure pedestrian and bicyclist flow, and coordinate with transit users’ needs

Functional  
Provide materials and amenities that are functional and easily maintained

All-Season  
Provide comfortable year-round use and reduce microclimate influence
Design Givens for all Options

- **Direct pedestrian routes** through and around plaza (8'-0" min.)
- Maximize **tree plantings** and green space
- Provide **flexible plaza areas** for a variety of activities
- **Transit Shelters** at all (3) transit stop areas
- **MBTA Operators' Booth** with visibility to all three bus stops and layover area
- **Bus boarding areas**  (8'-0" min. clear zone)
- **Separated bicycle facility**  (6'-6" min.)
- **Relocated Carl Barron Memorial** within the plaza
Urban Design Guidance

Developed Through Meetings with City's Internal Urban Design Team, Central Sq. BID & Stakeholders Over the Past Six Months:

- Establish Carl Barron as a Focal Point
- Be Bold, Creative, Playful and Whimsical
- Provide enough height to be visible from a distance, but also a pedestrian scale
- Use repetition to strengthen the visual unity of the plaza
- Build in capacity for placemaking, functionality and programming where possible
- Apply lighting effects and color to enhance vibrancy
Site Analysis & Constraints

- **Underground Utilities/Subway**
  - Major public and private utilities
  - Shallow utilities (electric, comms)
  - Sewer lines
  - Red Line Subway - Mass Ave.
  - Sanitary and drainage Lines

- Eight (8) Existing Trees

- Relocate/Re-envision Art

- Solar Orientation
  - Green St. edge: Sunny
  - Mass Ave: Shady
Repetitive, sculptural lighting and under lighting can serve as a ribbon of continuity throughout the space. Platform seating offers placemaking/performance opportunities. 

Sculptural seating, in addition to flexible seating, will activate the space and make it more inviting.

Incorporating wood on metal or stone adds warmth and is a durable solution to longevity.

Lean rails can be introduced at primary desire lines to separate bike and pedestrian circulation.

Scupltural structure/installation could serve as a focal feature, unifying the Plaza. Ideally the forms are visually connected to the MBTA bus shelters.

Provide spatial definition and shaded gathering opportunities with a pergola structure.
RIBBON OF CONTINUITY

PLAZA GATHERING OPPORTUNITIES

FOCAL FEATURE

MTA BUS SHELTERS

TREE CANOPY - CONSISTENT IN ALL OPTIONS
Two Refined Options

Option A: Sculptural Ribbon

Option B: Complementary Structures

Option A: Sculptural Ribbon

Option B: Complementary Structures
Option A: Sculptural Ribbon
A bold, sculptural feature serves as a ribbon of continuity throughout the space.

Introduce platform seating for placemaking/performance opportunities. Use under-lighting to enhance continuity within space.
Option A: Sculptural Ribbon

A bold, sculptural ribbon draws visitors into the plaza.

Simple bus shelters frame the gateway.
A bold, sculptural feature serves as a ribbon of continuity throughout the space.

Lean rails separate bike and pedestrian circulation at primary desire lines.
Option A: Sculptural Ribbon

Introduce platform seating for placemaking/performance opportunities.
Option A: Sculptural Ribbon

"Ribbon of continuity" sculpture extends into primary plaza space adding color and whimsy.

A combination of flexible and fixed seating offer numerous gathering opportunities and can accommodate larger programmed events.
Perforated metal with backlighting has been introduced to accentuate the ribbon structure. Underlighting touch down points provides the illusion the sculpture is floating.
Perforated metal with back lighting has been introduced to accentuate the ribbon structure. Under lighting touch down points provides the illusion the sculpture is floating.
Option B: Complementary Structures

PROPOSED TREE QTY = 22
EXISTING TREE QTY = 8
A pergola and matching bus shelters anchor both ends of the plaza.

Repetitive light columns and lean rails serve as a ribbon of continuity throughout the site.
Repetitive light columns, and lean rails serve as a ribbon of continuity throughout the site.

Bus shelters are designed in a similar vocabulary to a proposed pergola structure at the Mass Ave end.
Option B: Complementary Structures

Repetitive light columns, and lean rails serve as a ribbon of continuity throughout the site.

Bus shelters are designed in a similar vocabulary to a proposed pergola structure at the Mass Ave end.
A pergola structure provides a shaded respite on the plaza.
Introduce platform seating for performance opportunities.
Option B: Complementary Structures

“Ribbon on continuity” light columns extend into primary plaza space and pergola structure

A combination of flexible and fixed seating offer numerous gathering opportunities and can accommodate larger programmed events.
Light columns, bench and lean rail under lighting unify the design while emphasizing primary circulation routes.
A combination of light columns and lighting integral with the pergola structure, will activate the plaza in the evening hours.
Option B: Complementary Structures

Potential location for the Carl Barron Plaque, neighborhood information or sculptural art piece.
Two Refined Options

Design Opportunities

• Introduce a robust tree canopy
• Incorporate repetitive lighting and/or sculptural elements to unify the design
• A richly textured ground plain will enhance plaza unification
• A combination of fixed and flexible furnishings for seating options and event programming
• Simple, elegantly designed bus shelters will complement the overall plaza design

Option A: Sculptural Ribbon

Option B: Complementary Structures
Check in Questions

• How do these design options reflect the character of Central Square?
• What do you think of when you see these designs?
• Do these designs unify and connect both ends of plaza?
• Do these designs build in capacity for placemaking and programming?
• Do these designs meet the needs of plaza users?
Public Comment
Next Steps
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River Street Reconstruction

Take our survey and tell us how River Street works for you today!

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 unfixed 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 sign up for email updates on this project.

Click here to provide general comments and feedback.

The Public Input Map is now closed, but you can still access it through the link to see what input was provided on issues and opportunities along River Street and in Carl Barron Plaza.

Click the Map to Explore Cambridge

A 5-STAR Community and National Leader in Sustainability
THANK YOU!

riverstreet@cambridgema.gov