



City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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Public Meeting – Monday, December 16, 2024, at 7:00 PM Zoom MEETING MINUTES

The following meeting minutes were taken by Lena Frappier and are respectfully submitted.

Present Commission Members: Jennifer Letourneau, Director; David Lyons, Chair; Elysse Magnotto-Cleary, Vice Chair; Erum Sattar; Kathryn Hess; Lorie Graham; John Leo; Khyati Saraf; Jim Gerstle, Associate; Sean Bedingfield, Associate

Attendees: Lena Frappier, DPW; Kara Falise, DPW; Joe Rigney, MBTA/Delve; George Kober, MBTA; Ronald Guillotte, MBTA; Monique Hall, MBTA/ Brown; Tess Paganelli, MBTA

Alida Castillo; Andrey Fedorov; Ann McDonald; Brian Miller; Charles Teague; David Bass; David Nowak; David Stoff; David White; Diane Martin; Eppa Rixey; Federico Muchnik; Fran Cronin; George Laite; Heather Hoffman; Janis Kearney; Jeb Mays; Joel Nogic; John Hawkinson; Julie Croston; Kristin Anderson; Lauree Mansour; Martin Bakal; Martin Nee; Mary Shillue-Goldberg; Maya Bickel; Nancy Pendergast; Nathan Vierling-Claassen; Renata Pomponi; Sarah Adkins; Stefan Surette; Vicki Paret

David Lyons opened the meeting stating all commission members are present.

7:14 – Notice of Intent

DEP File #123-325

Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA)

New Red Line Access Tunnel within the 100-year Floodplain

Jennifer Letourneau, Director for the Conservation Commission, stated there were 17 panelists and 23 attendees, a total of 43 participants, to open the meeting. She directed that public comment will be held at the end of the presentation and commission responses, whereas the public should raise their hand. Jennifer also stated that public comment remained open since the last meeting and all email public comments including asbestos mitigation and tree mitigation have been circulated. She did specify that the commission does not have jurisdiction concerning those items and the purview focus is on Wetlands Protection Act 310 CMR 10.0 concerning floodplain impact and landscape restoration mitigation post-construction. Since the last meeting Jennifer attended two workshops held by the MBTA regarding landscape management where many Cambridge groups were also represented. She also stated that the previous permitted plans

from IQHQ have been overlaid with the MBTA plans. She explained the orders of conditions are written to leave a final planting plan to be submitted for review and approval once the construction is complete, because that is so many years out to hold people to a plan that is before us now is still very conceptual and it has been agreed that will be a public process. Jennifer also presented that the Cambridge City Council adopted an order that asked the MBTA to continue to work towards a healthy safe asbestos mitigation plan but is still not within the commission's jurisdiction. She followed up by listing several submissions of public comments and generalizing an excerpt from a comment submitted by ASG.

"Since the 11/18 hearings they've gone; from 30 native and non-native trees to 47 all native trees, from a total of 74 inches to now a total of 111, from 36 non-native shrubs to 147 all-native shrubs. ASG advocates continuation of the community process. ASG appreciates the recent constructive collaboration. ASG would like specifically to explore the feasibility of planting more trees on nearby parts of IQHQ parcels as well as adjacent MBTA parcels. ASG also advocates that the MBTA develop a long-term invasive management plan to protect mature trees that will remain, expand the time they are responsible for maintaining trees from three to five years. ASG requests that the Conservation Commission take the following action, either continue the hearing until subsequent progress has been made or include the community processing goals described above in an order of conditions for final approval."

Monique Hall, representing the MBTA, stated that the original plan had all the trees planted in a straight row and has been updated to a staggered allay for a more natural look while squeezing in more trees to move the count from 30 to 47. She also stated that they were also able to squeeze in some smaller single stem caliper trees along the drive between the tunnel and Alewife Center Road on the north side. They did leave clear lines of sight near all path intersections. Three juniper virginianus were reincluded to add an evergreen layer and for low ground cover they added bear berry, sweet fern, and wintergreen. Monique explained that the ground cover plants are only available in smaller pots, so the count has increased from 36 to 156. She also stated that from the beginning plan they have now aimed to increase species diversities and improve the ecological quality of the area, so they have gone from replacing two species of trees to 8 native species and completely altering the shrubs from one non-native shrub to 6 native ground covers and one cultivar which is a male form of winterberry that's needed for pollination. There are now two native seed mixes for the meadow area as well. One's a wetland riparian mix and the other one is a roadside pollinator mix and then application rates will be three times the normal application rate for lawns, just understanding the need to heavily seed these areas to make sure there is maximum viability and termination rates. Monique also included that total caliper inches has grown from 74 to 112 with the additions of evergreens.

Jennifer displayed some renderings of how the tunnel will look while Monique described the images. At the tallest point it's 15 feet 4 inches, at the lower end it's 10 feet 11 inches and approximately 130 foot in length. The base layer is concrete structure and then the upper darker portion is a perforated metal panel. Two more images were shown to show the relation as the trees are initially planted and then once they meet maturity.

David stated he would like to address some of ASG's concerns including protecting trees during construction and maintaining new plantings.

Jennifer stated that at the time of requesting a certificate of compliance, a level of

90% coverage and weed-free is expected, so whether that is three years or five years, there can be that conversation.

David asked if there were discussions concerning additional plantings elsewhere on the IQHQ property as the regular required mitigation does not apply to the state agency.

Tess Paganelli of the MBTA stated that they are certainly willing to have those discussions with the community but not willing to have that written in the order of conditions and will more likely address it in the negotiation of an easement rather than concerning the Wetlands Protection Act.

Jennifer also addressed the concern of the final view of the overlooks that was met to the maximum extent by the overseeding plan along with the increased shrubs understanding there can not be any plantings on the tunnel itself.

Monique added that if any plantings were expected of IQHQ outside of the tunnel limits, they could certainly still implement that.

Jennifer thanked Monique for that comment as that was a key item to review since the last meeting in comparing the area as previously permitted. She also updated that there were 18 panelists, 32 attendees for a total of 50 participants.

Erum Sattar asked for clarification between the relation of the two plans as she remembers the concern from ASG.

Jennifer displayed the map overlay

Joe Rigney, representing the MBTA, explained that where the plans cross there were no trees in the plan.

Jennifer stated that the intent for planting in the area where this tunnel is being met with those seed mixes and shrubs to the maximum extent that they can give the limits of planting with the tunnel being there.

Monique stated that the seed mixes are in the area where there are no trees being proposed, so they are matching that and then where there are trees right at the tunnel entrance, there's nothing that precludes IQHQ from planting trees adjacent to the tunnel on either side.

Kathryn Hess included that she appreciated the renderings depicting the relation to the outlooks that IQHQ is constructing to better understand the area.

Khyati Saraf stated that she met with Monique to discuss the planting plan and thinks the development looks great as the focus was on more native species and more plant materials with the goal of a more robust canopy. She stated that there may be a question about the overlap of the projects as seeds will migrate through the different zones.

Jennifer answered a question from Q&A by displaying an image to show the relation between Russell Field, Alewife Station, IQHQ, and MBTA.

Lorie Graham reiterated that importance of collaboration with IQHQ in the ongoing process of the real estate easement.

Tess confirmed that the MBTA will look at Khyati's comment concerning the seed mix through construction and timing coordination and that it will be evident in the final planting plan to submit.

Lorie asked if the invasive species management already exists.

Jennifer stated that a certificate of compliance is needed so once the construction is closed out there will be a discussion about who will be responsible because the easement agreement is not set. She stated she is expecting that it will be IQHQ as they already have a robust plan in the area and their previous orders of conditions.

David asked that the public limit their comments to developments since the last hearing as all the written comments have also been received and there is no need to repeat from prior hears. There will be a limit of three minutes.

Eppa Rixey, a member of Alewife Study Group and resident of Harvey Street stated they appreciate the MBTA's engagement with the community and improvements made to this plan through the community process. They said they understand the importance of the tunnel and the value of the improvements that the MBTA is trying to make to the red line, but this project will involve removing 28 mature trees with diameters of 10 inches, some as big as 20, 25 totaling 279 inches of caliper. So, you can either take 75 trees that would have been planted with a more interventionalist approach by IQHQ in this area where the footprint of the tunnel is or 28 mature trees, but either way, there are substantial impacts. Eppa stated if the area was cleared and planted with trees, the trees would be in a lot better living conditions rather than directly up against a tunnel in a narrow work area of about six feet around the tunnel and there wouldn't be a large tunnel there at all. They also said while there might be good reasons for the site to be here and improvements to the planting plan, it still is a fact that these trees are going to be in somewhat adverse conditions, and they will never reach the mature sizes that they would have if they were planted in a more natural setting. Eppa stated that these larger impacts to trees in the area are significant because this is upwind of the city's athletic fields, and it involves disturbing asbestos contaminated soil and multiple impacts on the community. ASG has been asking for consideration of some of these parcels nearby that the MBTA either has an easement on, like the drainage ditch just to the north of the MBTA head house that exits to Russell Field or Parkway Pond, which gets utilized as a stormwater management facility for Alewife Station. Eppa said these are parcels that the MBTA has not been great stewards of, and they are largely overrun with invasive species with vines that are choking out existing trees there. They said this area could be improved substantially and there could be opportunities to make up for some of those 279 inches that are not being replaced in some of these immediately adjacent areas that would offer significant benefits for the area and also set this area up to improve over time through ongoing maintenance and stewardship and removal of invasive species offering a really important benefit for the community in return for the impacts that will be had where this tunnel site is.

Heather Hoffman of 213 Hurley Street thanked Eppa for the in-depth comment and agreed with their points along with the comments laid out by ASG. Heather stated the tunnel project has been hidden from the public for two years and while there were other plans being made with IQHQ the flood storage that is in fact part of the Wetlands Protection Act jurisdiction was put in a different place so that the trees in the conservation area here could be retained. They pointed out the risk bringing asbestos contamination from underground where it isn't hurting anyone to being spread above ground, which I suspect is not the sort of thing that the Wetlands Protection Act was set up to encourage in a wetland, because the MBTA does not believe in following the Cambridge Asbestos Protection Ordinance, which was written for the very asbestos contaminated area that we are talking about. Heather stated we're losing all the flood mitigation advantages of mature trees and reiterated that so many things will be lost because the MBTA hid the plans and now as a government agency with an emergency does not have to follow any ordinance.

David Bass of the Alewife Study Group reinforced Eppa's comments. They stated that every square inch of Cambridge is precious and ideally, every square inch should in some way benefit the residents of the city. The need for a high rail access tunnel here is understandable but still, the T is taking a half-acre of conservation land away from the neighborhood. David said the T is significantly reducing the number of mature trees in this conservation area, and that needn't have happened had they been more communicative up front. They are grateful for all the work the MBTA has done and for all they will be doing in ambitiously planting trees and shrubs in the narrow strips of land alongside the tunnel, but this doesn't fully make up for the half-acre of conservation land that will have been lost. They stated and for this reason ASG's requests for restoration of the area to the north of the Alewife tea plaza, specifically the parkway pond and the adjacent drainage swales, is reasonable and is justified in replacing the amenity that is being lost. David said the removal of debris, planting of native trees and control of invasives in these areas, are generally turning an eyesore into a thing of natural beauty would more fully replace the thing of beauty that is being compromised by the high rail access tunnel structure.

Jeb Mays of Harvey Street in Cornerstone Co. Housing close to this construction site. They mentioned two other projects on MBTA controlled land, one of which is the redesign of Linear Park which is along the area also next to the IQHQ site, as well as the Alewife Garage. Jeb stated along with the IQHQ construction, this community has faced and continues to face an enormous amount of disruption and an enormous risk of losing mature trees, which are so important to help mitigate the effects of this heat island area of North Cambridge. They also emphasized the concerns of the community and particularly of parents and families about the impact of disturbing the asbestos ridden soils. They said unless steps are taken that the MBTA appears unwilling to take, asbestos will be released into the air and it will float over Russell Field which is where our children play as well as adults, and into the neighborhood where we live and many, many other families live. Jeb said they strongly support Eppa's comment that the entire project needs to be put back into consideration what other sites might meet the needs of the MBTA without disturbing asbestos ridden soil and without the loss of so many trees that we so desperately need.

Martin Bakal of North Cambridge agreed that there are other places for the site and different options without losing the mature trees with all the other ones lost including the ones that the MBTA cut down, about 70 of them right in this area near Alewife only maybe six months ago.

They agreed with Jeb's comment about the heat island. Martin stated they can't believe that the MBTA are not going to follow the actual ordinances that are required by the city, which IQHQ already committed to the fact that that would happen on their lands. They said it seems like this is just asking for a lot of trouble in the area that they've lived in for about 17 years now and raised a child who's now in high school. Martin agreed with the need for the tunnel but said they have landed themselves and questioned why are they having to go to asbestos ridden wetlands?

Anne McDonald of the Whittemore neighborhood spoke on the fact that they walk this land every day, especially around the whole IQHQ site and people in the Whittemore neighborhood will be cutting through the IQHQ site on that very path. They said it was generous work by the neighborhood organizations and IQHQ to open this land and make this accessible to all and make it a conservation space that could be enjoyed in the neighborhood. Anne stated they are part of the steering committee for Save the Alewife Brook and wanted to thank the MBTA and all the other community organizations who've been meeting repeatedly recently to try to look at this plan and see it in a more way that supports the neighborhoods and the residents, as well as allows the T to be better maintained. They said the trust piece is a struggle and suggested that this should be continued until there is something in writing and plans for replacement of the tree capacity. Anne stated they do not understand the need for NEPA acre minimization but would like it clearly laid out compensation of trees, handling of the asbestos and timeline.

Jennifer stated everything presented is the actual construction plan and the only moving piece is the planting plan.

Mary Shillue-Goldberg of 8 Clifton Street stated they are new to the issue, and they live in walking distance to Alewife therefore their kids, ages 8 and 12, play at Russell Field. They voiced their concern about the potential release of asbestos into the atmosphere and hopes the city of Cambridge holds the MBTA accountable to ensure that this is done in a safe manner. Mary stated if Cambridge residents can't chop down trees on their own land and there are other sites that don't involve the destruction of trees or release of asbestos, they should be considered. They also said knowing that the state and local regulations are different, they didn't think they would have to discuss which environmental regulation to follow.

Renata Pamponi from Mass Audubon stated they sent in written comments but wanted to acknowledge the great collaboration with MBTA and particularly in the plant list, taking advantage of many of the suggestions that came out in the community meetings. They echoed ASG's concerns, in particular the invasive management commitment and continuing replacement of mature trees. Renata stated that as there are multiple owners in this situation it may be unfair to just expect IQHQ to implement the invasive management plan and maintenance of the area.

Charles Teague of 90 Jackson Street and member of Cambridge for Trees stated they are less than a thousand feet from the site. They echoed Anne's comment on trust and asked why on earth grant a permit when the trees and asbestos remain unresolved? Charles asked the T to relocate this project because digging asbestos feet from Russell Field is unconscionable as there can never be zero risk to the public. They stated the landscape plan is prettier, but it does nothing for climate change now as there have been droughts 8 out of 10 years. Charles listed there's no irrigation, lots of this stuff is going to die and the trees that survive will take decades to start any climate mitigation, so our heat waves will be more intense for the neighborhood. They stated

ASG wrote that 100 mature trees are lost because of this project and asked to add all the trees cut down in Alewife Station this spring. Charles said probably by accident, the T is waging war on our green infrastructure in their neighborhood. They stated they sent in a table of tree mitigation alternatives and there's been no effort to discuss them or to commit to the tree protection on this because the site so small. Charles said that they're upset that the T is evading regulations and stated the cheapest and best thing for climate is to preserve the existing trees, so they are advocating just moving this project. It's cheaper and safer.

Andrey Fedorov of Arlington and previous 15-year resident of Cambridge bikes the Minuteman Bikeway with their son frequently and stated they also just learned of the project. They stated that it is strange there was not a proactive process or even a current central location providing all the documentation for the project to help with transparency and help build trust with the community. Given the importance of all the development and potential consequences of this. Andrey stated they do see how this project will help fight climate change because of the need for more reliable, more efficient public transportation, but at the same time would like to see the other options that were considered because you must meet very high standards to justify excavation of asbestos and cutting all the trees that were discussed today. They said it does not help that these alternative solutions and options considered are not clearly communicated to the community and that the area which will be affected is clearly a huge heat island. Andrey stated given the lack of communication, they would like to be sure that all the communities that will be directly affected living there, with a large amount of affordable housing in that area, are aware of this development. They said they understand that asbestos risk mitigation is outside of the jurisdiction of the conservation committee but talking to the MBTA now, you can see that community members are very concerned. Andrey asked if they are planning to address this in the most stringent manner, to the standard of Cambridge City, why don't they just make the statement that they will do everything to the best possible standard in this country to mitigate those risks, and then that will shut down all those concerns about what they are going to do.

Joel Nogic said they appreciated the process over the last few weeks to improve the planting plan and the tree plan within the scope of the project. They stated because of some choices that were made before there was any opportunity at all for public input on the size of the work area, there is no way that planting plan and tree plan could sufficiently make up for the loss in the conservation area that was planned by IQHQ. Joel asked that the T would publicly agree to continue community workshops and in good faith continue to look for solutions to the problems that still exist outside of the specific area for this project including the IQHQ land, Parkway Pond, the drainage ditch or any other nearby locations. Joel stated it doesn't necessarily have to be T easements and explained DCR allowed IQHQ to do some work on their property to install safety call boxes and lights along the parkway pond path so cooperation between different landholders and agencies would be good. Joel also expressed they would love to hear Khyati's response to extending their long-term maintenance plan for whatever is in their jurisdiction once the real estate is finished from three to five years to match what IQHQ has done as it's especially important given the large amount of invasives in this area. They stated they estimate there's 26 mature trees that are very close to the work area with a total trunk diameter of 321 inches including black cherry, gray birch, poplar, and black locust and would like to hear from the T that they will specifically enact measures to protect those trees that would be very vulnerable during the construction.

Lauree Mansour of Clay Street stated they only learned about the project a couple of months ago when ASG leafleted the neighborhood. Lauree asked how the larger RFP for the whole Alewife Garage and Alewife Station could impact this project and if they could be done simultaneously otherwise there is a long period of construction if there is first this tunnel project followed by the larger garage project. They echoed comments from everybody in the neighborhood with concerns about the asbestos. Lauree's husband does soccer at Russell Field with first and second grade boys and thinks this is a really big risk for the community and would like to learn about what other options there are or different locations for this tunnel

David stated one of the themes running through the public comments is the ongoing questions about compliance with the asbestos protection ordinance mentioned that the city council passed a policy order a week ago asking for the T to follow those rules as they go through the Mass DEP process with RAM plan modifications. David asked the MBTA to express what they are willing to commit to.

Tess stated as a wetland scientist and not a hazardous material specialist, they can't speak to the detail of the asbestos concerns as they pertain to the RAM and the PIP process. They also said as far as they know there will still be community discussions pertaining to those plans for asbestos management.

David alluded to a significant undertaking just north of there, the IQHQ property where they did comply with the ordinance and demonstrated that work under those requirements is feasible when there's commitment to do it.

Tess responded again that they can not speak to that commitment.

David listed the other theme through the comments in additional effort to identify opportunities for tree mitigation on either this immediate area or adjacent areas that the T may have control of.

Tess stated that they are open to continued community engagement and as someone mentioned DCR in the comments, they are trying to work with DCR on a broader urban tree planting plan statewide. Tess continued with saying they are happy to monitor the plantings for five years and if at three years they're not doing as well as the Conservation Commission would like a five-year monitoring plan again is common for them with the Army Corps of Engineers as well. As invasives management is built in to receive the certification of completion they are willing to manage that first three to five years during that process.

Elysse thanked the new participants who commented and reiterated that they were concerned about the general awareness of the project. Elysse also asked if the director could go over the next steps for the project and what oversight as the Conservation Commission looks like for the attendees to hear.

Jennifer stated the commissions jurisdictional areas are floodplain and planting mitigation post-construction. She listed items from the conditions including setting up the project, setting up the work zone, setting up for safe construction, erosion, sedimentation controls, tree protection, access roads, the entire setup, who's in charge, who's the point of contact person, and who's

doing the SWIPs are all a part of the pre-construction piece. Then there is the construction monitoring piece, and then there is the construction mitigation on the end.

Jennifer stated the special conditions for this will be to contact us 72 hours in advance of the site to confirm tree protection and signage is up. She said the commission walks the site through the access points, where fences are, where all of construction mitigation controls are set up. There are also walks through trucking routes to ensure no idling and no stockpiling for setting up your construction site. Jennifer stated during construction she monitors the site monthly. The post-construction phase is the planting plan for review and approval followed by post-construction mitigation phase where plants are kept alive, and weeding occurs. She also said in general they will have to go through an MCP process that will have a RAM plan, and the plan will live with the contractor that is doing the work so the contractor who gets this contract will be responsible for submitting and getting an approved release abatement measure plan. The owner of the job can do some level of due diligence, which is happening right now with a pre-RAM and a PIP process. Jennifer added from a strictly through Wetlands Protection Act perspective this commission and these proponents have worked through all aspects to getting as far as we can in this process.

Kathryn stated her appreciation for the overview and from her perspective the questions have been answered within the narrow limitations of the commission's jurisdiction. She asked everyone to understand when the commission gives approval there are still other steps for the proponent but acknowledge the limited jurisdiction of the commission.

Erum asked if it is continued with the commission what more could be done.

David answered that it has already been given that the commission has had all answers met and the only other step would be conditions.

Lorie asked if ongoing collaboration with IQHQ could be listed in the order of the conditions.

Jennifer answered that the commission usually requests all copies of permits associated with the project including building permits, environmental permits and final construction documents. The only thing that is left out right now is that the two plans somehow get merged, where IQHQ's plan and the planting plan associated with this is somehow cohesive. She stated one's not going to be completed before the other one begins.

Tess cautioned that they wouldn't want to take on the responsibility of meeting IQHQ's mitigation goals.

Jennifer responded that their mitigation goals were not in their order of conditions and their RAM plan was not associated with the order of conditions. She mentioned linking order of conditions because there is order of conditions for IQHQ and now an order of conditions within that same site. Jennifer cited the plans and asked if the MBTA is under construction how will IQHQ be able to build either of their outlooks.

Tess stated it is certainly in both of our best interest to play nice.

Jennifer stated neither order of condition should nudge out the other so somehow, we need to just smooth this out.

David interjected maybe we need some sort of reporting condition like in six months, report back to us on having the extent of your conversations with IQHQ.

Lorie stated the real estate deal and whether it's going to be an exclusive easement or not and all those pieces could be why this is so difficult.

Jennifer answered that we don't have to solve it right now. So, suffice to say that there could just be a special blanket condition that said given that there is an existing order of condition that precedes yours, your work should not preclude them for completing their work.

Kathryn asked if IQHQ should return to add a new condition onto them about playing nice.

Khyati asked if establishing the limit of work in terms of construction sequencing making sure the limit of work of both the projects is coherent and coordinated.

Jennifer agreed and asked the MBTA if that condition sounds reasonable.

Tess answered yes, that's important to them too.

Jennifer read a comment from the chat that stated that even though 310 CMR 10.0 Wetlands Protection Act does not specifically mention asbestos, this does impact wetlands, so it is under the purview. Jennifer responded to the comment that the issue of excavation in this area from a construction perspective and from a recreation of floodplain has been met as part of this process. In any typical construction process, if there is excavation and soil disposal that is not something we get involved in. The Conservation Commission only states if there is excavation there is no truck idling, and the soils are covered. We do not get into any specific issues with soil characterization or disposal or the means and methods by which things are excavated. That is not under the purview of the Conservation Commission, only so much as there's floodplain and that that floodplain has been mitigated. That is what we get involved with. Jennifer restated the special conditions, construction mitigation, tree protection, five-year planting and invasive management, the final planting plan with community involvement and this will not preclude the pre-existing order of conditions, nor will theirs preclude you from getting your work accomplished.

Sean asked to clarify if we were to approve the plan that's been presented that would be sufficient for the MBTA, it would however breach IQHQ's original plan. If they agree to an easement on this land, it will reopen the requirements discussion that we had with IQHQ and the original construction plan.

Jennifer responded IQHQ signed off on this notice of intent meaning this plan assumed the post-construction calculations for IQHQ. So, because we were assuming the post-construction conditions for IQHQ, it does not null and void their permit.

Julie Croston stated they read the Wetlands Protection Act, and the ordinance referenced earlier and summarized that nothing should preclude any more strict local bylaws or ordinances and then questioned why the city's ordinance still is not applicable regarding asbestos in this situation

Jennifer responded by paraphrasing an email from City Solicitor Meghan Bayer stating MBTA's essential governmental functions and therefore the MBTA is immune from the city's tree ordinance and asbestos ordinance and that the city ordinance and local ordinances interfere with the MBTA's ability to fulfill its essential government function. Jennifer updated that there were 41 participants, 17 panelists, and 24 attendees present.

8:43 – The commission unanimously approved to close public comment.

7 – In Favor

Erum asked to confirm when the commission will hear from the proponent again.

Jennifer stated she will be in contact with Tess again every six months and monthly during construction as she still visits IQHQ monthly.

David agreed with some of the commenters that it was unfortunate to learn of this project after permitting the area. Alternatives were considered at a previous meeting and convinced of the need it is then just a question of mitigation and ensuring compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act.

Erum stated she heard the same comments and hopes the MBTA looks at how important the public process is and heard that the community was dissatisfied through this process.

Lorie seconded Erum's concerns and thanked the commission for addressing the asbestos even though it is not in the commission's purview and hopes the MBTA in good spirits does what is best for the community.

David listed the special conditions being construction mitigation, tree protections, five-year planting maintenance and invasive management plan, commission approval of the final planting plan with community engagement between MBTA and IQHQ.

8:50 – The commission unanimously approved the order of special conditions.

7 – In Favor

8:58 – Administrative Topics

2025 Meeting Calendar and invites sent.

8:52 – Meeting Adjourned

7 – In Favor