

**Construction Mitigation Meeting**  
**March 28, 2007**  
**6:00 PM**  
**Honan Public Library, North Harvard Street**

**Harvard Allston Task Force Members**

John Cusack  
Rita DiGesse  
Mike Hanlon  
Brighton Lew  
Harry Mattison  
Ray Mellone, *Meeting Chair*

**Harvard University**

Will Donham  
Peggy Hayes  
Ken Johnson  
Ed LaFlore, *Construction Mitigation Consultant for Harvard University*  
Kelly McQueeney  
Allison Nichols  
Alison Reinhardt  
Kathy Spiegelman

**City of Boston**

Representative Mike Moran  
Bryan Glascock, Director, Boston Environment Department

**Introduction – Ray Mellone**

Ray said he was looking forward to hearing more information about Harvard's construction mitigation plans and was hoping that Harvard would address the demolition of the former Pepsi building; how Harvard would address the liabilities for the businesses and homes surrounding the site including loss of business, damages, and the effect on the water table; and how Harvard plans to minimize the impacts of the construction. Ray encouraged audience members to attend the Task Force meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at St. Anthony Elementary School. He said that there is an open executive meeting with the Task Force on April 4<sup>th</sup> and the Task Force members will be discussing process and how to report out on the sub-committee meetings on April 9<sup>th</sup>. He said community members could attend if they wanted but the discussion would be among the Task Force members.

**Introduction- Kathy Spiegelman**

Kathy said that Harvard hopes to set a high standard for its construction mitigation plan and standardize the plan to be used throughout all of its development. She introduced Ken Johnson, Senior Program Manager for the Allston Development Group, who is overseeing Harvard's construction mitigation plan for Allston.

### **Presentation – Ken Johnson**

Ken introduced Ed Laflora, the construction mitigation consultant for Harvard, and Kelly McQueeney, Senior Environmental Engineering with Harvard's University Operations Services department. Ken, Ed and Kelly will lead the construction mitigation efforts for Harvard's Allston projects. He said that developing a plan that works well is an evolutionary process that will involve Harvard keeping the neighborhood informed and getting the neighbors' feedback.

Ken presented an overview of Harvard's draft construction mitigation plan that covered:

- neighborhood communications
- truck routes and worker parking
- noise and vibration
- dust and emission control
- rodent control
- construction debris

### **Questions and Comments**

- Harry Mattison- What percentage of the construction workers do you expect will use the truck routes during the project?  
*Ken said that Harvard hasn't designated a specific route for workers and that it will think about what it should tell the construction workers. He said that the truck routes will be mandatory for vehicles bringing materials in and out of the site.*
- Ken said that the Sears building will be demolished and the site will be used for construction worker parking. He said that about 800 parking spots could fit in the Sears lot. Mike Hanlon asked what Harvard was going to do to provide protection to the homes on Windom and Hopedale Street. Ken said there would be a buffer area between the homes and the work zone for Stadium Way before the edge of the worker parking lot. Ken said Harvard will need to work closely with the abutters to discuss what buffer techniques such as landscaping or fencing will be used. Joyce Radnor asked for clarification on this and Ken said that from the fence line buffer to Stadium Way there is probably a 80-90 feet range but that Harvard hasn't done an official survey there yet.
- Ray Mellone asked if the parking lot would be at grade level.  
*Ken said yes, it will be at grade level so the Sears foundation will need to be taken down 4-6 feet.*
- What will be the workers' access to the parking lot? Will the workers be forced to come on and off the pike to get to the site? (Tim McHale)  
*Ken said that it was envisioned one-way access from Cambridge Street.*
- An audience member was concerned that 800 cars would be coming in and out of the site every day resulting in an additional 1,600 trips.

- Is the truck route using the existing Almay Street? (Joyce Radnor) What's going to prevent people from going down Hopedale and then to Windom Street to get to Almay Street? (Ray Mellone)  
*Ken said there isn't anything there today to prevent people from doing this but Harvard is proposing to move the access and install a buffer between Windom Street and the existing Almay Street so that cars can only access Almay Street from Cambridge Street and trucks would not have access to Windom Street.*
- How will workers get out of the site? (Harry Mattison)  
*Ken said that the route will be one-way and workers will have to go out to Western Avenue.*
- Will drivers coming from the west have to go down Western Avenue to Cambridge Street to get to the site? What will prevent them from finding shortcuts? (Ray Mellone). John Cusack said that one way to prevent this is to secure Rotterdam Street.
- Suggestion to use the CSX land that Harvard owns to build a bridge from the Massachusetts Turnpike to the access road to allow vehicles to go straight into the site.
- Questions about why Harvard couldn't build a road going east from Rotterdam Street and then South to the Turnpike next to the Genzyme building.  
*Ken said he thought this would be discussed in greater detail at the meeting on 3/29 about street proposals.*
- Suggestion to have an entrance for workers on Western Avenue (Mike Hanlon).  
*Harvard thought this was a good idea and suggestion.*
- How will Harvard manage all 800 construction workers leaving the site at the same time? (Ray Mellone)  
*Ken said that Harvard would have an officer on detail duty at that location.*
- Suggestion to make the parking solutions for the construction workers simple in order for them to work. Are construction workers going to be forced to park at the Sears site and will Harvard charge them for parking? (Joyce Radnor)  
*Ken said that Harvard was not going to charge the construction workers for parking and that construction workers will have some form of ID such as a hang tag for their car. Harvard will work with its contractors to enforce this.*
- *Ken said that Harvard will provide concessions and amenities at the former WGBH building to draw workers to the site and get them out of their cars. Suggestion to move the amenities closer to the parking site.*(Ray Mellone) *Ken said that construction workers will have to go there anyway to start their work.*
- What about providing construction workers access to the T?  
*Ken said that Harvard wanted to make it very convenient for the construction workers to get to and from the T and would provide a shuttle. He said Harvard was also going to*

*provide lockers on site for the construction workers so they don't have to bring all of their tools with them every day.*

- Questions about Harvard's traffic studies. Suggestion to use more entry and exit points to allow cars to filter through more easily and to avoid crowding at key intersections. Suggestion for a Harvard student to conduct the traffic studies.  
*Ken said Harvard is still trying to get an idea of the number of projected workers that will be on site. He said initially it won't be too many.*
- Suggestion to have a shuttle bus to pick up the construction workers who have to park at the very south end of the Sears parking lot. In the past this was done for the construction of One Western Avenue and it made a big difference. Once the construction workers got use to riding the shuttle they used it all the time. (Joyce Radnor)  
*Ken said this was a good point and Harvard would look into this.*
- Is there a construction manager already hired?  
*Ken said Turner Construction has been hired for the first science building.*
- Mike Hanlon suggested allowing construction workers to access the site from Western Avenue in the early morning hours because there is not a lot of traffic at that time.
- Suggestion to stagger the work day for workers so that they aren't all coming and going at the same time. An audience member said this happens on most construction jobs.
- At what stage will the contractors start to use the Comcast building?  
*Ken said that it may be a year from now but it may be less than that. Most likely when the mechanical and other trade workers start to come on site.*
- What will the construction site fence look like? A wire fence with green lining is not going to work or be supported by the neighborhood. Suggestion that Harvard needs to install large stockade fences and mature trees. There needs to be something that will keep the dust out. (Joyce Radnor). Suggestion that Harvard do something similar to what was done for its Northwest Science Building. This looks a lot better and the neighborhood would appreciate this gesture. (Harry Mattison)  
*Ken said that Harvard is definitely willing to work the neighbors about what's appropriate and acceptable. Ken said he doesn't know if there's an opportunity to provide that kind of buffer on Western Avenue because it is so close to the road.*
- Is Harvard going to dig all the way down in the blue outlined area (reference to outline of the project site in Ken's presentation)?  
*Ken said yes, within that area Harvard is going to excavate all the way down.*
- What level are the design drawings at now? When will the contract documents be ready? Will the drawings be completed before the project is started? (Tim McHale)  
*The design drawings are at 30% now. Allison Nichols said that the 60% set of design drawings should be completed at the end of June or July. She said there will be a good*

*year of foundation work. She said the entire construction drawings will not be 100% complete at the start of foundation work.*

- Harry Mattison suggested Harvard provide examples at the Task Force meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> of what it considers as world-class construction fencing options/screenings that could work for the science project. He suggested Harvard prepare a handout if it couldn't be an agenda item at the meeting.

*Ken said that he wasn't involved with setting the agenda items for the Task Force meetings and suggested having a work session instead where Harvard could bring some examples and hear the neighbors' ideas.*

- Joyce Radnor asked for clarification about who is responsible for the construction fencing.

*Ken said that Harvard will have a logistics consultant design the construction fencing and then give this to the contractor to build.*

- How many days a week will construction work take place on site? (Mike Hanlon)

*Ken said that as required by a City of Boston ordinance, construction can take place Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. however, Harvard can apply for extended days through the City. Ken said that Turner is preparing the construction schedule and that when it is complete Harvard will have more details about the schedule.*

- Where will all the ground water be displaced to? Does Harvard have baseline water measurements and will it be continually monitoring the measurements?

*Kelly said that the water will be treated and discharged to the Charles River. Kelly said that Harvard has done a baseline study and does have readings and the contractor will be instructed to keep the water level within three feet of the baseline.*

- Will the noise ordinance apply to the parking lot areas? (John Cusack)

*Ken- Yes.*

- Will the noise and vibrations affect Genzyme's business?

*Ken- Harvard is not sure yet but will come back to another meeting to show the neighbors what the area of projected influence is.*

- Will explosives be used to raise the buildings? (Mike Hanlon)

*Ken- No.*

- What's going to happen to the WGBH parking lot?

*Ken- it will be consumed as part of the construction site.*

- Does Harvard know what kinds of materials are in the existing buildings that are going to be torn down?

*Ken said that yes, there are some regulated materials, such as asbestos and florescent light bulbs, in the buildings that will need to be removed before the buildings are*

*demolished. Ken said that an expert will be on site during this process and will need to certify that the removal was done appropriately*

- What happens when the alarms go off signifying that the vibration limit has been exceeded? Will a loud speaker system be used as a way to warn people and quickly broadcast the message? (Ray Mellone)

*The contractor will immediately stop the action, review the situation, and try to understand the cause of the problem. Ken also said that radios, Nextel phones and cell phones seem to be the most effective way to communicate on construction sites now.*

- What kind of foundation will be used for the science building?

*Ken- It will probably be a mat foundation with either sheet piling or slurry walls where workers would have to use a vibratory hammer.*

- Suggestion for Harvard to standardize construction mitigation plan over the course of the next 20 years. There shouldn't be any additional construction traffic through Barry's Corner. There should be monthly update meetings between the community, Harvard and the General Contractor. Harvard should provide an overall construction schedule similar to what was handed out to the community showing the article 80 process and the different filings. Noise should be controlled through appropriate fencing options. When a good buffer system is agreed upon this should be applied to all projects.

*Ken said he wasn't sure exactly how to control additional traffic in Barry's Corner. He said that once Harvard has a better understanding of the work force that will be on site then it can work with the community towards coming up with a solution. Ken also said that 50% of the workers on the project will be residents of Boston.*

- Where will the wheel washing for the trucks take place?

*Ken said it will take place right on site before the trucks exit. Once Turner completes its site logistics plan more of this information will be in the contract documents.*

- *Ken said that Harvard will let the community know once it has an abatement schedule. He said that the community should be aware that the abatement process will begin before the demolition process.*

- What is the estimated cost of the science center? (Mike Hanlon)

*Kathy said Harvard didn't have a number to share at this time.*

- What kind of security measures will be taken? Will Harvard police be monitoring the site during construction?

*Ken said that Harvard has hired a security consultant that is preparing a construction security program. He said that Harvard will probably hire a security team to be on site during construction that will be overseen by Harvard University Police.*

- Does Harvard have a sense if the programs within the science building will spark any controversy or safety problems?

*Kathy said that many of the science initiatives already exist in other science buildings throughout Harvard's campuses in Cambridge and Longwood. Kathy said that Harvard is not expecting that it is going to be any different with this building and that the buildings on its Cambridge and Longwood campuses are also close to residences. Kathy said that nonetheless, Harvard is taking the appropriate caution and is confident it will be able to protect the buildings and the people around the science project.*

- Comments from Bryan Glascock
  - Pleased to see that a lot of the issues and concerns that were raised by the community at the Task Force meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup> made their way into Harvard's construction mitigation plan.
  - The City of Boston and the Environment Department request a lot of the same things Harvard is proposing to do.
  - He hasn't seen any "red flags" in Harvard's plan and so far he feels comfortable with it.
  - Harvard and the community need to continue to go through the discussion process, and allow for flexibility and adaptability.
  - The City of Boston is ready to step in at any time if there is a problem or if there are any burdens placed on the community. Harvard is directly accountable to the community.
  
- Comments from Representative Mike Moran
  - Does Harvard think that 800 parking spots at the Sears site will be enough for its construction worker parking? This issue can't be glossed over by Harvard and Harvard needs to be constantly aware so that workers don't park in the neighborhood.
  - Harvard should really consider the possibility of reopening the road next to the Genzyme building to provide direct access to the Turnpike. The least amount of traffic going down North Harvard Street, the better.
  - It's imperative that the construction job employs workers from the 02134 and 02135 zip codes. Harvard should demand that Turner does this and makes sure that Allston-Brighton construction workers have the opportunity to work on this site.
  
- What are Harvard's thoughts about the logistics for the other projects on Western Avenue? What will be the future impacts on Western Avenue? We know the neighborhood and we know that people are going to start to find alternative routes through the neighborhood. Harvard needs to think about the neighborhood streets and the traffic patterns (Harry Mattison)  
*Ken agreed and said that Harvard has to continue on with its traffic studies.*
  
- *Ken suggested that the take away tasks for Harvard were to:*
  - 1). *Show examples of different buffer options and how they can be designed*
  - 2). *Work with the neighborhood on further traffic studies*
  - 3). *Do some advance planning for the number of projected construction workers over time.*

- When will the second science phase begin? (Mike Hanlon)  
*Kathy- We don't have a schedule yet. We understand that we have to get more specific but we don't have dates yet.*
- What is the timeframe of Rena Park?  
*Kathy- This could be a potential change to our Master Plan and Harvard is considering the possibility of starting the park area right behind the Library as part of the community benefits discussion.*
- Has Harvard considered using the trains to bring materials in to the site instead of trucks?  
*Kathy- Yes, although Harvard hasn't come up with a resolution yet.*
- Is there any construction planned for Western Avenue?  
*Ken said that there will be some construction work that will tie in with the utilities infrastructure. Kathy said that there also could be street improvements on Western Avenue, Stadium Way and North Harvard Street, such as new sidewalks and tress. She said that the question was what period of time is the most appropriate for this work. Harvard doesn't have a full design for these improvements but some of it could be built at the same time as the science building.*
- What is going on with the Citgo property?  
*Kathy said that Harvard does not own the property now. The activity on the site is related to Harvard's interest in the property. Harvard will let the community know if it has more information to share.*
- What about the water table in the neighborhood? If the water drains out, will it create a pocket underground? What is the probability that the neighborhood could sink or that individual houses could sink?  
*Ken said that the contractor will have the appropriate measures in place to not allow the water table to be drawn down that low. If it is drawn down it will quickly be replenished.*