

South Boston Dorchester Avenue Improvement Study
Task Force Meeting
Meeting Summary
Monday, December 11, 2006

Location: 88 Black Falcon Avenue, South Boston

Attendees: Brad Washburn, BRA
Jill Zick, BRA
Keri Pyke, Louis Berger Group
Gretchen Von Grossmann, Von Grossmann & Co.
Linda Zablocki
Denise Lynch
Beth Bernier
Pattie McCormick
Carol Houghtaling, Aide to Representative Wallace

The meeting of the South Boston Dorchester Avenue Improvement Study's Task Force was called to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of VeriClaim, at 88 Black Falcon Avenue, by Brad Washburn, Planner with the BRA.

Brad Washburn began the meeting by greeting the Task Force and thanking them for attending. An intersection improvement presentation was made by Keri Pyke, the project manager from the Louis Berger Group, and Gretchen Von Grossmann, Principal Urban Designer from Von Grossmann & Company. The agenda included rubber sidewalks, 6-way intersection examples, review of Corridor-Wide guidelines and analysis of issues and opportunities in Andrew Square. Input from task force members was encouraged throughout the presentation.

Gretchen explained the benefits of installing rubber sidewalks. Task force members were concerned about the resistance of rubber sidewalks to ice and snow. Jill explained that the Department of Public Works would like to do their own testing of the rubber sidewalks before approving use in the city. Boston may become a pilot program for rubber sidewalks if DPW believes they are appropriate for Boston.

Photos of three other 6-road intersections were presented and discussed. Talk focused on the possibility of a rotary or roundabout to slow circulation along with using Duratherm on top of road asphalt to accent the center of the square.

Gretchen reviewed the Corridor-Wide guidelines of concrete sidewalks with accent, pendant or acorn light fixtures, street trees and buffers. Task force members relayed their visits to Fields Corner and Hyde Park to study these components. Members believe that acorn lighting is not bright enough for Andrew Square and recommended pendant lighting. Members value and support installation of trees, but do not want trees blocking lighting. Members are concerned about brick popping up on sidewalks and recommend a

low maintenance program. Members would also like historical installations throughout the square along with a gateway sign welcoming people to Andrew Square and signs encouraging residents to take care of the neighborhood.

Gretchen explained how it is important to create sidewalks with buffers in order to make Andrew Square a more pedestrian friendly environment. Tree installation and buildings can create edges to allow the area to have more residential character. There are several asphalt areas facing the intersection that would be ideal for buildings in the future. The Memorial site on the Square could be enhanced. The high pedestrian volume in Andrew Square will feel safer if crosswalks are shorter. This can be achieved by extending bulb-outs and adding trees or flowers close to the intersection. Task Force members felt confident that, if installed, neighbors or businesses would maintain these green areas. It is also possible to widen sidewalks and reduce roadway so pedestrians have a more defined space.

Kerri explained that the traffic volumes are more workable than expected and that several things could be done to organize driving through Andrew Square. Traffic signals should be upgraded and placed correctly along with the installation of left-turn bays. Better street signs and lane painting need to exist so drivers know where they are going. Dorchester Avenue, a main city boulevard, should be highlighted with Duratherm so drivers can easily identify it. Taking out the right hand cut-through between Boston Street and Dorchester Avenue would allow the edges of the square to increase.

Task Force Members are concerned with taking medians out of the square as they see them as necessary islands for pedestrian crossing.

Gretchen explained that the consultants will work to create 3 options to move forward with design. Other intersections for basic improvements need to be decided upon.

Brad informed the Task Force about a planned South Boston Dorchester Avenue Business Workshop sometime in February.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30pm.