



August 18, 2016

Thomas J. Tinlin, Highway Administrator
MassDOT, Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Administrator:

The Department of Conservation and Recreation ("DCR") is pleased to express our support for the MassDOT-proposed Grade-Separated Multiuse Path on the Boston side of the Anderson Memorial Bridge which would enhance the Paul Dudley White (PDW) Bike Path. We also would like to submit the following comments and indicate our commitment to working with MassDOT to ensure the underpass project design respects the integrity of the Charles River Basin Historic District and provides safety improvements and path continuity for our parkland users. DCR has care, custody, and control of the Charles River Reservation and the PDW Bike Path, a portion of which is adjacent to the bridge abutments on the Boston side of the river.

DCR shares MassDOT and the community's desire to focus on improving bicycle and pedestrian connections within the Charles River Basin. DCR recently made a \$1.5 million investment in maintenance of the PDW Bike Path. We agree with the selection of the underpass as the preferred alternative for a grade-separated path, although it has a permanent adverse effect on the historic resources, because it avoids conflicts with the use of the river by the boating community. The proposed connecting path and underpass will enhance recreational opportunities for users of the PDW Bike Path and increase safety by eliminating conflicts with motor vehicles at the busy North Harvard Street crossing.

DCR staff have met with MassDOT staff to discuss the preliminary design for the grade-separated path project. DCR has some concerns regarding the impact of the underpass to the parkland and historic nature of the bridge itself, as well as for ensuring the safety of users, but is confident that continued involvement in the project will ensure the desired outcome. The two intersections of the underpass path with the existing path/sidewalk introduce potential points of conflicts and accidents. Cyclists and pedestrians tend to be more cautious at vehicular intersections than when there is a merger of non-motorized users. The design of the path has been developed to be wide open, to maximize sight distance and minimize accident risk. We will work with MassDOT to additionally make right-or-way and signage decisions that are in the interests of user safety at this path intersection. Additionally, the path construction will result in the the loss of green space along the Charles River and alter the historic views. DCR will work with MassDOT to design complimentary landscaping and ensure consistency in architectural details.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Charles D. Baker
Governor

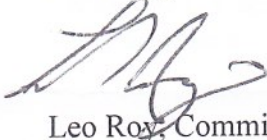
Karyn E. Polito
Lt. Governor

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary, Executive
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Leo Roy, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

DCR staff will continue to consult with MassDOT to ensure the design of the grade-separated path addresses our concerns and is in accordance with our Master Plan for the Charles River Reservation. Additionally, DCR will participate with MassDOT in the consultation with Massachusetts Historical Commission to ensure the appropriate minimization and mitigation of impacts to the historic resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Leo Roy', written in a cursive style.

Leo Roy, Commissioner

Cc: Renata von Tscharnner, Charles River Conservancy