

Background information for 3/3/11 Natick Transportation Meeting with Secretary Mullan

1. Oak Street / Route 9 intersection improvements: The Town needs assurances about the funding and scheduling to complete this project expeditiously

- This project is nearly 100% designed. It is an essential component of accommodating the MathWorks expansion which will have building permits issued this spring. Traffic/travel demand was discussed in 2007 with then MHD Commissioner Paiewonsky, committed to supporting funding for the project. To date no funding appears forthcoming other than the 5+ year old federal earmark for \$1.4 million, leaving the project underfunded and unconstructed in time to meet the traffic demand. The Town has requested this to be on the TIP for several years. Approximately \$4.1 additional is needed to fund the interchange and an MDOT desired extension to the project.

2. Angle parking in Natick Center: we need conclusive word on whether angle parking will ever be allowed in a state-funded improvement

- Diagonal parking on Main Street optimizes downtown parking on Main Street (Route 27) in Natick Center; fits the curb to curb dimension well and is not disruptive to the traffic flow pattern of Downtown Natick. It also appears reasonably safe and drivers are comfortable with it. District 3 has continually advised the Town that the State would not accept or fund diagonal parking if it were added to the Route 27 project. As we are negotiating for easements to accept the roadway and potentially include it in this project, we need clarification of whether angle parking will be grandfathered.

3. CSX negotiations: the Town and CSX are at an impasse regarding the ROW for the proposed Cochituate Rail Trail

- CSX has appraised the land at \$14.5 million; the town has appraised it at \$3.5 million using the CSX methodology, which does not reflect market value. CSX has not countered the Town's initial offer. The Town is committed to providing extensive funding to the Cochituate Rail Trail Project but believes this to be a regional facility and worthy of State assistance in attaining ROW and/or construction funding. We may explore a taking of portions of the ROW that are needed for drainage improvements. For one section of ROW, CSX quoted a \$5000 entry fee plus a \$57,000 balloon payment if the Town has not acquired the entire ROW by August 2013. Specific local assistance, or a statewide solution to CSX ROW acquisition is desired.

4. Route 27 design/construction/drainage: the Town's design is at 25%; we need assurances of final design and construction, and this should include the full upgrade to drainage to make this a 50-year project, vs. 15 years

- The Project seeks to use available drainage facilities where appropriate but also needs upgrading in certain areas, which District 3 has advised against. This conflicts with the Town's ability to gain DEP approval for a substantial 6.38 acre

Smart Growth project in an area of Town that needs drainage improvements to protect private property from inundation.

5. Route 9/27 interchange: when is a realistic timeframe for this project to be designed and constructed

- Town will have attained 25% design likely by 3/31/2011. The Town formally requests that MDOT take over the remainder of the design and work with the Town to achieve a full design. This intersection is also associated with the traffic travel demand being created by the MathWorks expansion. The Town respectfully requests that the State appropriate funding to this antiquated interchange.

6. MBTA garage: the Town has never received formal word that we will not have an MBTA garage in West Natick

- The T's reluctance came to the Town as a significant disappointment, since the existing facility cannot meet the every workday demand at this regional location and the T already owns the property. A growing impact of regional commuter parking continues to negatively impact residential neighborhoods.

7. MBTA Natick Center station: we would like an estimate of when this station will be made accessible as this is critical to our TOD strategy for Natick Center

- This is an intensively used station that would provide much greater service were it to be made fully accessible. .

8. McDonald's service plaza lighting: status of MDOT request of McDonald's to consider alternative signage, or consideration of a spot-lit vs. backlit sign to reduce light trespass

- The Town has proposed that the DOT offer McDonald's compensatory signage in exchange for eliminating light trespass from the 70 foot tall sign that affects neighborhoods on both sides of the Turnpike. This has been a problem since 2001, when the Turnpike signed a 25 year lease that included service plaza improvements. McDonald's has declined to make any changes in its most recent correspondence with the Town (2009). Another alternative is spotlighting, vs. backlighting the signage.