



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUSAN B. SCHLESINGER,
*Assistant City Manager for
Community Development*

June 18, 1996

Patrick J. Moynihan
General Manager
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
Ten Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3974

Dear Mr. Moynihan,

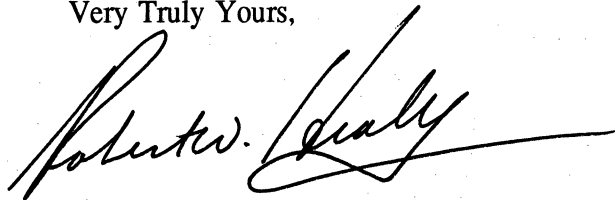
As you may be aware, in May of 1993 a task force was established by the City of Cambridge to address the pedestrian safety problems along the MBTA's Fitchburg Division Commuter Rail Line in North Cambridge. The task force consists of 25 people representing the abutting neighborhoods, City Departments, State Senators and Representatives, and the MBTA. The Task Force has held numerous meetings, monitored the work of a consultant team, and sponsored two neighborhood-wide public meetings in order to develop the recommendations presented in the final study report (see attached report and executive summary). This report identifies locations of active pedestrian traffic across the tracks at numerous points in the North Cambridge area, and outlines both long term and short term measures to improve safety. The long term measures (including improved barriers and three grade separated crossings) and short term measures (including improved signage, a paratransit service and fencing repair) are both important aspects of the recommendations.

In a letter to me dated April 28, 1994, then General Manager John Haley stated that the MBTA proposed initiating paratransit shuttle service between major destinations on either side of the tracks in the North Cambridge area between which these pedestrian trips are currently occurring. Along with residents of North Cambridge and the City Council, I am extremely disappointed that the MBTA has not planned and implemented this or other transportation service to offer a safe alternative to pedestrians crossing the railroad tracks. The City provided to the MBTA detailed information concerning a proposed route and participated in initial discussions with the MBTA Private Carrier Coordinator Sharna Small. In addition, the City proposed as a potential alternative to shuttle service, extension of the MBTA's 83 bus to the Fresh Pond Shopping Center following replacement of the Alewife Brook Parkway truss bridge. MBTA planning staff expressed interest in this approach to providing service, as it is both more cost-effective and is of greater use to travelers along the 83 route. In October 1995 it appeared that the T was prepared to extend this bus route upon Spring 1996 completion of the bridge project, or sooner. MBTA staff recently indicated that neither the shuttle service nor the extension of the 83 bus is being implemented. I would ask that the MBTA rededicate itself to these proposals, and complete any additional work needed for the shuttle or bus service to be put in place. With the improvements planned for this area

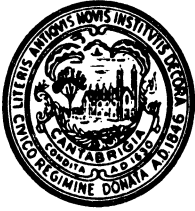
of track (one underpass and two overpasses) still more than two years away, this service is still critically important to the safe passage of North Cambridge residents.

Additionally, the MBTA also committed to the installation of new signage in this corridor in letter dated Nov. 2, 1993. I request that this installation also proceed as soon as possible. While we look forward to working with the MBTA in the implementation of these proposals as well as the long term work of the grade separated crossings, it is important the MBTA maintains its commitments on these important short term measures.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert W. Healy



15.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

June 24, 1996

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item No. 13, regarding issues with the commuter rail line in North Cambridge, I am attached a communication sent to General Manager Patrick Moynihan of the MBTA from Assistant City Manager Susan Schlesinger expressing disappointment over the lack of commitment from the MBTA to the short term measures to improve safety for North Cambridge residents near the Fitchburg commuter rail line.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #15

5-342

Relative to Awaiting Report Item
Number Thirteen, regarding issues
with the commuter rail line in
North Cambridge.

In City Council June 24, 1996

*Placed on file with request
that the City Manager
invite MBTA officials
to attend a meeting of the
Railroad Safety Committee*