



FINAL PUBLICATION NUMBER 2970

First Publication Number 2969. First Publication on November 27, 2002.

City of Cambridge

In City Council

November 25, 2002

ORDERED: That \$1,800,000 of the unexpended balance of the \$1,900,000 bonds dated December 1, 2000 issued for the North Cambridge railroad underpass project under the loan order passed May 15, 2000 shall be transferred to the following purposes and the appropriation made under such May 15, 2000 order shall be reduced by \$1,800,000:

\$700,000	Improvements to Cambridge Street
\$600,000	Miscellaneous Building Renovations
\$500,000	Area Four Open Space project – Phase I

and, further, that the borrowing authorized for the improvements to Cambridge Street project under the loan order passed May 17, 1999 shall be reduced by \$700,00 that the borrowing authorized for the Miscellaneous Building Renovation Project under the loan order passed May 17, 1999 shall be reduced by \$600,000 and that the borrowing authorized for the Area Four Open Space project – Phase I under the loan order passed May 21, 2001 shall be reduced by \$500,000.

In City Council December 9, 2002.

Adopted by a yea and nay vote.

Yeas 8; Nays 0; Absent 1.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council Dec 9, 2002

Unfinished Business #9 Adopt loan order

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis
✓				Ms. Marjorie C. Decker
		✓		Mr. Anthony D. Galluccio
✓				Mr. David P. Maher
✓				Mr. Brian Murphy
✓				Mr. Kenneth E. Reeves
✓				Ms. Denise Simmons
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
✓				Mayor Michael A. Sullivan

9 0 1
 Bm m suay VV/8
 RF 0-8



FIRST PUBLICATION NUMBER 2969

City of Cambridge

In City Council

November 25, 2002

ORDERED: That \$1,800,000 of the unexpended balance of the \$1,900,000 bonds dated December 1, 2000 issued for the North Cambridge railroad underpass project under the loan order passed May 15, 2000 shall be transferred to the following purposes and the appropriation made under such May 15, 2000 order shall be reduced by \$1,800,000:

\$700,000	Improvements to Cambridge Street
\$600,000	Miscellaneous Building Renovations
\$500,000	Area Four Open Space project – Phase I

and, further, that the borrowing authorized for the improvements to Cambridge Street project under the loan order passed May 17, 1999 shall be reduced by \$700,00 that the borrowing authorized for the Miscellaneous Building Renovation Project under the loan order passed May 17, 1999 shall be reduced by \$600,000 and that the borrowing authorized for the Area Four Open Space project – Phase I under the loan order passed May 21, 2001 shall be reduced by \$500,000.

Passed to a second reading at the City Council meeting held on November 25, 2002 and on or after December 9, 2002 the question comes on adoption.

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



FIRST PUBLICATION NUMBER 2969

City of Cambridge

In City Council

November 25, 2002

ORDERED: That \$1,800,000 of the unexpended balance of the \$1,900,000 bonds dated December 1, 2000 issued for the North Cambridge railroad underpass project under the loan order passed May 15, 2000 shall be transferred to the following purposes and the appropriation made under such May 15, 2000 order shall be reduced by \$1,800,000:

\$700,000	Improvements to Cambridge Street
\$600,000	Miscellaneous Building Renovations
\$500,000	Area Four Open Space project – Phase I

and, further, that the borrowing authorized for the improvements to Cambridge Street project under the loan order passed May 17, 1999 shall be reduced by \$700,00 that the borrowing authorized for the Miscellaneous Building Renovation Project under the loan order passed May 17, 1999 shall be reduced by \$600,000 and that the borrowing authorized for the Area Four Open Space project – Phase I under the loan order passed May 21, 2001 shall be reduced by \$500,000.

In City Council at the meeting of the City Council held on November 25, 2002. On or after December 9, 2002 the question comes on adoption.

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

November 25, 2002

To The Honorable, The City Council:

By way of further explanation of Agenda Item Number 12, regarding reallocation bond proceeds from the already authorized and issued bond proceeds for the Yerxa Road Underpass please be advised of the following:

This recommendation does not in any way represent a cancellation of the project. This is an accounting requirement to allocate these monies to projects for which the monies have been expended.

The Yerxa Road project has grown in scope and cost from the originally authorized \$1.9 million to \$4.0 million.

The FY 04 Capital Budget contains an item of \$4,070,000 for this project. The temporary repairs to open the underpass have been placed out to bid and will be awarded to allow for a February reopening with reasonable weather conditions.

Again, this is a financial accounting requirement, and the new loan order for the project will accompany the FY04 Budget Adoption.

I apologize for any confusion caused by this agenda item.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/dls

North Cambridge Railroad Safety Improvements Project

Project area runs along both sides of the MBTA and B&M railroad tracks from the cul-de-sac adjacent to Alewife station and Alewife Brook Parkway to Don Mcmath Park.

1993: The Community Development Department, in response to a request from the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee (NCSC), commissioned a feasibility analysis study of alternatives for improving pedestrian safety along the Fitchberg Division railroad tracks in North Cambridge. Wallace, Floyd Associates was selected to conduct the \$15,000 CDBG funded study.

1993: The North Cambridge Safety Task Force was formed with representatives from the NCSC, Walden Square Apartments, Jefferson Park Housing Development, Fresh Pond Apartments, and the MBTA to oversee the progress of the study. Meetings were held on a regular basis from the beginning to completion of the feasibility study. Meetings with the Task Force have continued through the preliminary design phase and will be held through construction of the pedestrian crossings.

1994: North Cambridge Railroad Safety Study completed. Three grade separated crossings were recommended where pedestrians are currently crossing the tracks and will connect the Fresh Pond Apartments with the Fresh Pond Shopping Center; Jefferson Park Housing Development with Danehy Park; and the Fitzgerald School with Neighborhood 9 at Yerxa Road (underpass). The existing underpass will be replaced. Also, a multi-use pathway paralleling the railroad right-of-way between Rindge Field and the cul-de-sac sidewalk that connects to Alewife stations will be constructed on the north side of the right-of-way to connect the three crossings.

1995: Wallace, Floyd Associates selected by Community Development Department to continue work on a preliminary design of the long range improvements recommended as a result of the North Cambridge Railroad Safety Study. Project was funded with \$50,000 in capital funds.

1996: The state's Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) released \$500,000 for the design of the pedestrian safety crossings in North Cambridge. The funds were appropriated by the state legislature as an element of the 1996 Seaport Access Bond Bill.

1997: The Community Development Department requests \$500,000 (which will be reimbursed by the EOTC) to design three pedestrian safety crossings in North Cambridge. The City Council appropriates the requested \$500,000 in November, 1997.

1999: Final design is underway.



City of Cambridge

16.

IN CITY COUNCIL

August 1, 1994

VICE MAYOR RUSSELL

WHEREAS: There is a longstanding safety problem associated with people crossing and traveling along the MBTA's Fitchburg Division Commuter Rail Line in North Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: Many citizens of Cambridge have been striving for years to obtain safe pedestrian crossings over these railroad tracks; and

WHEREAS: This City Council has adopted many orders and resolutions as introduced by various members regarding the extremely hazardous conditions along this rail right-of-way; and

WHEREAS: The North Cambridge Railroad Safety Task Force, comprised of representatives from the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee, the Fresh Pond Apartments, Jefferson Park, Walden Square, City Departments, the MBTA and other interested residents, was formed by the Assistant City Manager for Community Development in early 1993 to address these issues and make recommendations for improving safety; and

WHEREAS: This Task Force, after meeting diligently over the past year and a half and with the aid of a consultant hired by the Community Development Department, has overseen the production of a report and endorsed recommendations for improving the safety conditions along the railroad corridor and improving mobility for all Cambridge residents in the area; now therefore be it

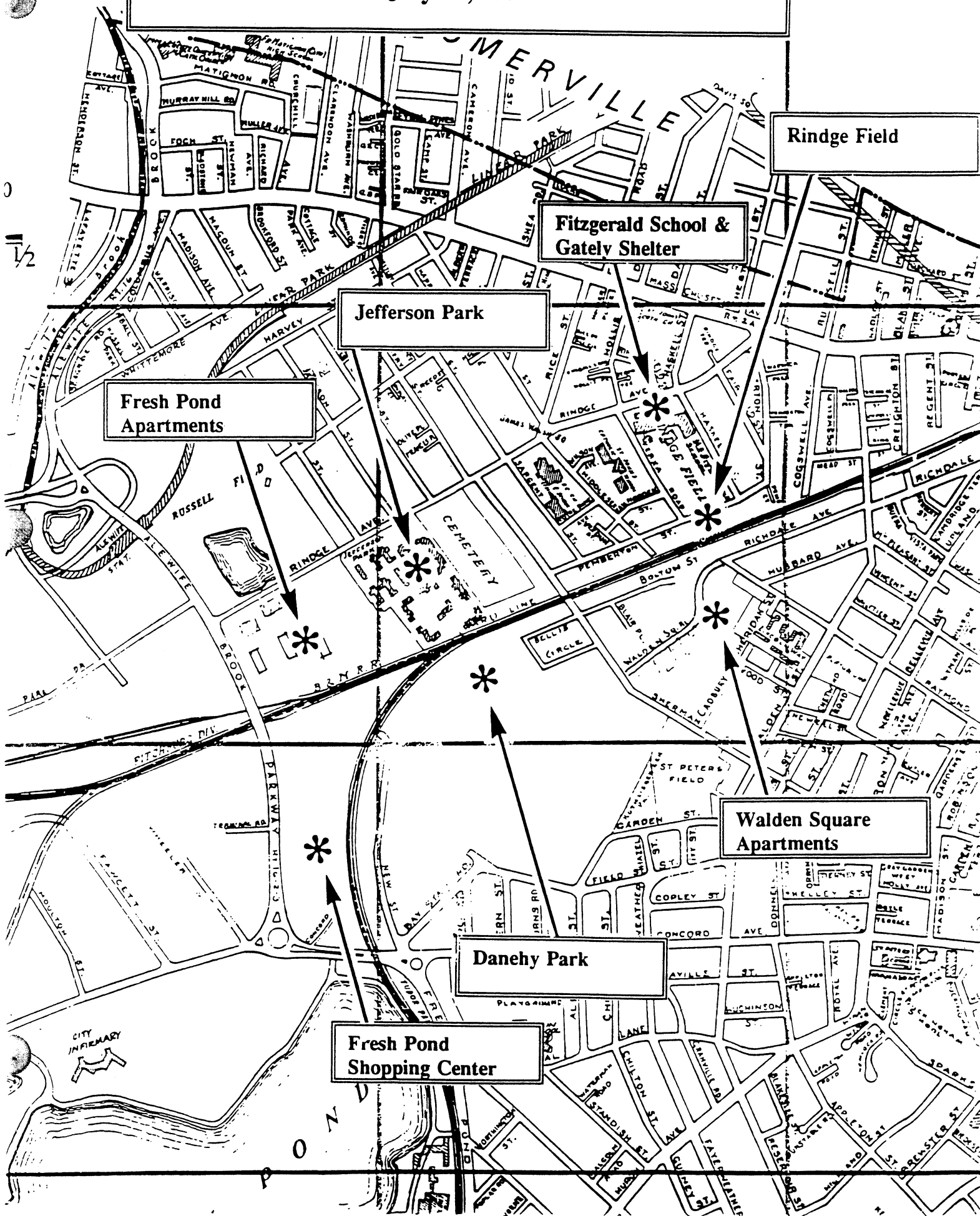
RESOLVED: That this City Council commends the North Cambridge Railroad Task Force, the City Manager and the staff of the Community Development Department for their cooperative effort in developing the recommendations contained in the report; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this City Council fully endorses the recommendations contained in the North Cambridge Railroad Safety Study Report, dated June 1994, and requests the City Manager to immediately seek commitments and funding from the MBTA and/or any other State or Federal Agencies for implementing these proposals; and be it further

-2-

RESOLVED: That the City Manager is requested to report back to this City Council by October 1, 1994 on the progress made towards implementing these recommendations.

**NORTH CAMBRIDGE RAILROAD SAFETY
HOUSING AND DESTINATIONS**
July 25, 1994





CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300
FAX 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

August 1, 1994

The Honorable, the City Council

I am pleased to forward for your use the final report, including an executive summary, from the North Cambridge Railroad Safety Study. This report is the product of the task force established in May of 1993 to look at the pedestrian safety problems along the Fitchburg Division Commuter Line in North Cambridge. The task force, which consisted of over 20 people from the abutting neighborhoods, City Departments, the MBTA, and representatives from our State Legislative Delegation, held numerous meetings, monitored the work of the consultant team, and sponsored two neighborhood wide meetings in order to come up with the set of recommendations presented in the report. These recommendations were supported by those in attendance at the final public meeting held on June 28, 1994.

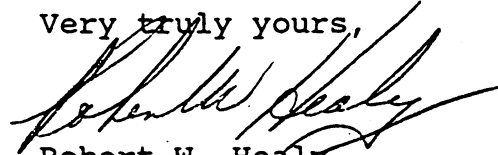
The study clearly indicated that there are three distinct locations where large numbers of people are crossing the tracks. This resulted in a long-term recommendation, costing from five to seven million dollars, for three separate crossings, all connected by a linear path parallel to the railroad tracks. Although staging is possible, the study emphasized the importance of constructing all three crossings in order to fully address the problem. When considering this long-term proposal, we must balance the ideal solution with the financial resources of the City.

To move this project forward, we must secure non-city funds for these recommendations. Both the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the State Transportation Bond Bill provide money which could be used for these improvements. However, the City can not apply for these funds directly but must seek a commitment from the MBTA to construct the improvements since they control the expenditure of both the State and Federal public transportation money available for this type of project. Although the MBTA has indicated a willingness to participate in the implementation of one grade separated crossing, that commitment is not sufficient to complete construction of the entire program.

The City and the community must, therefore, launch a sustained advocacy effort to aggressively pursue a MBTA commitment to fund these improvements. This advocacy effort will also have to include pursuing other possible sources at the state and federal level which might fund pieces of the total program. One example of this would be to have the proposed connection of the Minuteman and Paul Dudley White bikeways follow an alignment that could provide one of the needed railroad crossings.

As far as short-term improvements are concerned, we are currently working with the MBTA to finalize the route and schedule for a shuttle bus, operated by them, which will help residents reach destinations such as the Fresh Pond Shopping Center and Danehy without having to use the railroad right-of-way. In addition, we are hoping to have the Rindge Avenue bus (Rte. 83) extended to the shopping center as soon as the new Alewife Brook Parkway Bridge is completed.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUSAN B. SCHLESINGER

Interim Assistant City Manager
for Community Development

MARY FLYNN

Deputy Director for
Community Development

NORTH CAMBRIDGE RAILROAD SAFETY STUDY

Executive Summary

Introduction

In May of 1993 a task force was established by the City's Assistant City Manager for Community Development to look at the pedestrian safety problems along the MBTA's Fitchburg Division Commuter Rail Line in North Cambridge. The task force, which consisted of over 25 people representing the abutting neighborhoods, City Departments, State Senators and Representatives, and the MBTA, held numerous meetings, monitored the work of a consultant team, and sponsored two neighborhood wide public meetings in order to come up with the set of recommendations presented in the final study report and summarized here.

Background

As indicated on the map on the following page, a number of high density housing areas are arranged alongside the MBTA Commuter line tracks, across the tracks from popular city-wide or neighborhood destinations, including:

- *Walden Square Apartments* - with 240 housing units and more than 700 residents, Walden Square is just south of the tracks, with the *M.E. Fitzgerald Elementary School*, *Gately Shelter Teen Center* and *Rindge Field courts and playing field* just across the tracks;
- *Jefferson Park and Jefferson Park Extension* - with 284 housing units and more than 800 residents, Jefferson Park runs along the north side of the tracks, with *Danehy Park* just across the tracks; and;
- *Fresh Pond Apartments* - with 500 housing units and almost 1200 residents, the Fresh Pond Apartments are along the north side of the tracks, with the *Loews Cinema/Fresh Pond Shopping Center* just across the tracks.

Since the mid-1970's there have been consistent reports of problems with people illegally crossing the railroad tracks along the railroad right-of-way running behind the afore-mentioned residential areas. These crossings have resulted in 6 deaths since 1973. There have been numerous requests by residents of the housing adjacent to the tracks to provide safe passage to the other side of the tracks, and discussions and City Council Orders to remedy

the situation have surfaced over the past twenty years, especially while Danehy Park was being designed, and then when the new Alewife Bridge was being designed. No action was taken for a variety of reasons, including cost, lack of agreement by residents on a desirable solution, and the lack of a comprehensive assessment of the complexity of the problem. The Railroad Safety Task Force set out to recommend the most feasible course of action to resolve this longstanding problem for the more than 3000 Cambridge residents who have lived with this predicament for more than twenty years.

Survey and Observations

The indication of the extent of the existing problem with the railroad comes from a number of sources, including:

- Observation - site visits at these sites by the consultant and the Task Force indicate active crossings between these points, as well as active movement along the tracks to these destinations.
- Survey - results indicate heaviest use of the crossings to Danehy Park and the shopping center is from the afternoon to early evening, with the heavy Yerxa Road school use during the morning not apparent in the survey results.
- Documentation - The Appendix to the report contains numerous accounts in newspapers over the years of injuries of fatalities as a result of illegal railroad crossing in the study area.

The Recommendations

LONG-TERM SOLUTION

The long-term solution is based upon providing a reasonable means for separating people from trains while allowing pedestrians to conveniently reach their destinations. A detailed description of the recommendations is presented in the report. The following is a summary of those proposals:

- **Provide grade separated crossings in the locations where pedestrians are currently crossing (Yerxa Road and the Fitzgerald School, Fresh Pond Apartments and the Fresh Pond Shopping Center, and Jefferson Park and Danehy Park)**
- **At the Yerxa Road location, an underpass should be considered.** While a pedestrian bridge could serve this location, an underpass is preferable since the clearance requirements would result in a much shorter walk for pedestrians. The underpass should be designed with wide and shallow approaches to be fully visible from Richdale

Ave. and Pemberton St. and allow for police surveillance vehicles to pass through while preventing other vehicles from entering the underpass.

- **Two pedestrian bridges should be constructed west of Sherman Street, one between Jefferson Park and Danehy Park and the other between the Fresh Pond Apartments and the Fresh Pond Shopping Center.** These bridges should be connected by a linear path paralleling the ROW. One-bridge schemes would not be direct enough to eliminate at-grade crossings of the railroad ROW.
- **Provide a linear path connection, wherever possible, parallel to the ROW from the cul-de-sac near the Alewife Red Line Station to Porter Square** - A bicycle/pedestrian connection in this corridor would allow for greater use of the pedestrian crossings, would accommodate those pedestrians who are using the ROW as a neighborhood connector, and add a useful link in the City's expanding bicycle network.
- **Increasing other means of transportation** - In order to provide mobility for those who may find the pedestrian bridge too difficult, whether because of age, infirmity, weather or load, shuttle buses should be provided and an on-call ride service be implemented.
- **Construct Barriers** - Once the alternative means of transportation are in place, the ROW should be fenced on both sides with a minimum 8' high, vandal resistant steel fence. Fencing should extend the entire length of the linear path.

When considering the long term recommendations, they must be seen as a package of necessary improvements which will be successful only if implemented in their entirety. For instance, the Task Force recommends improving the barrier system along the tracks, but not until alternatives to crossing the tracks in place. The two pedestrian bridges each have their own function, not only in serving different desire lines (i.e. Fresh Pond Apartments to Fresh Pond Shopping Center, or Jefferson Park to Danehy Park), but also different neighborhood populations as well.

The Task Force recommends that funding be sought from the MBTA as well as State and Federal transportation fund sources, with staging of the work possible given that money is scarce. However, a long term commitment for the total project is needed.

As described in the report, the recommendations are intended to give the City general direction toward implementation. Its components have not been designed. When the design stage does begin, all appropriate community groups, individual residents,

business people, City Departments, the MBTA, and other appropriate state and federal agencies should be included in the process to ensure success.

From the community's point of view, depressing the trains in a tunnel would be the ideal solution as it would allow residents to cross where they wish and walk along the ROW. The problems with the construction of such a tunnel, plus its very high cost (the consultant's estimate was \$70 - 90 million) would make funding for this alternative very difficult. Since there are other means of addressing safety issues which are much less costly, minimize construction disruptions, have the flexibility to have staged construction, and are more likely to be funded, depressing the trains is not the recommended solution.

SHORT-TERM SOLUTIONS

The following short-term recommendations were selected because they could probably be in place within one year, are not overly expensive, and are likely to be supported by both the City and the MBTA.

- **Establish Safety Programs** - Implement community wide programs such as "Operation Lifesaver", a low cost national public education program that trains representatives to give safety training on railroad related issues. This program has had positive effects in other communities and could be offered at the Fitzgerald School and throughout the school system, the Fresh Pond Apartments, Jefferson Park, Walden Square and the Gately Shelter.
- **Improve Signage** - The MBTA is currently working on a new signage systems emphasizing railroad safety. Since the schedule for completing the design is unknown, the City should work closely with the MBTA to ensure the installation of new signs takes place as soon as possible.
- **Maintain the Alewife Brook Parkway Bridge** - Since the MDC is responsible for maintaining the ramps and sidewalks on the new bridge, the City should monitor their snow shoveling and maintenance efforts.
- **Extend the Rindge Ave. Bus (Rte. 83)** - This bus route should be extended to the Fresh Pond Shopping Center as soon as the new Alewife Brook Parkway bridge is complete, hopefully by the fall of 1995.
- **Improve Visibility** - Visibility for train engineers should be improved by clearing overgrown shrubbery adjacent to the ROW wherever possible.

- **Establish Shuttle Service** - The MBTA has agreed to operate a shuttle bus in the area which will reduce the demand for people to cross the railroad tracks. The City is now working with the MBTA to implement this service in the fall of 1994.
- **Use Audio Warning** - At the request of the task force, train engineers are now sounding their whistles in the project area. This is an important component of safety and should continue at least until the long-term safety improvements are in place. However, reasonable time restrictions (e.g. no whistles after 11 p.m.) should be implemented to limit annoyance to residents.
- **Repair Fencing** - Damaged fencing by the tennis courts at Yerxa Road should be repaired so that pedestrians do not need to chase balls into the railroad ROW.
- **Slow Trains** - Although the benefits of slowing down the trains is difficult to predict, the task force remained in favor of this proposal. However, since slowing the trains is opposed by the MBTA for reasons discussed in the report, the time frame within which this could be implemented (if it can be implemented at all) may be extensive.

WP\60-9\RR-EXEC.RP5

PUBLIC INVESTMENT PLAN

BUDGET

COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE & DEVELOPMENT
- North Camb. Railroad Crossing Project

FY96	50 000
FY97	5 000 000
FY98	
FY99	
FY00	<u>5 050 000</u>

FY96 FUNDING. In the Spring of 1994, the City completed a study of the North Cambridge Railroad Crossings Corridor which determined the need for a separated pedestrian/bicycle crossing of the Fitchburg Division railroad tracks in North Cambridge. Funds from the State Transportation Improvement Program will finance the construction of this project. The City is required to finance the design costs associated with this project. To fulfill this

obligation, \$50 000 from Free Cash has been set aside in the FY96 Capital Budget. This allocation will cover the assembling of the existing mapping of the area, any necessary field surveying, preparation of a base map of the corridor, and the design of the actual crossing. In addition to the design of the railroad crossing, the feasibility of constructing a walkway/bikeway along the roadway will be addressed.

FY97-00 FUNDING. The \$5 000 000 in State Transportation Improvement Program funds needed to finance the construction of the North Cambridge Railroad Crossing will be made available to the City in FY97. Construction of a grade separated pedestrian/bicycle crossing over the Fitchburg Division railroad tracks in North Cambridge as well as a linear walkway/bikeway from the cul-de-sac across from the Alewife Red Line Station to as close to Porter Square as possible will be financed through this allocation.



12

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

November 25, 2002

To The Honorable, The City Manager:

I would like to request the loan order passed May 15, 2000 be transferred to the following purposes and the appropriation made under such May 15, 2000 order shall be reduced by \$1,800,000 for the North Cambridge railroad underpass.

\$700,000	Improvements to Cambridge Street
\$600,000	Miscellaneous Building Renovations
\$500,000	Area Four Open Space Project – Phase I

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/dls

Cal 9,54

Consent Agenda #12

Transfer, reduction and
authorization of \$1,800,000 from
the North Cambridge railroad
underpass project for the
following purposes: \$700,000
improvements to Cambridge
Street, \$600,000 Miscellaneous
Building Renovations and
\$500,000 Area Four Open Space
Project – Phase I

In City Council November 25, 2002

**PASSED TO A SECOND
READING.**

In City Council December 9, 2002

**LOAN ORDER ADOPTED.
8-0-1.**