

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
RECEIVED BY
OFFICE OF ~~EXECUTIVE~~ *Office of Transportation and Construction*
1990 APR 10 PM 12:34 *Department of Public Works*
CAMBRIDGE MA. *Office of the Commissioner*
Ten Park Plaza, Boston 02116-3973

April 5, 1990

William J. O'Brien, Jr., Chairman
Office of the School Committee
P.O. Box 167
Arlington, MA 02174

RE: MDPW Route 2/Alewife Brook Parkway project

Dear Mr. O'Brien:

Secretary Salvucci has asked me to respond to your letter dated March 12, 1990 expressing the School Committee's concerns regarding the Route 2/Alewife Brook Parkway project. The MDPW shares these important concerns and we are designing the roadway improvement project accordingly.

In order to improve the traffic merge to Route 2 from Alewife Brook Parkway and the MBTA station outbound ramp at the Dewey-Almy intersection, we are proposing to add a third lane in the westbound direction. By using a low retaining wall along the portion of Route 2 adjacent to Thorndike Field we will be able to avoid any encroachment into Thorndike Field. In order to improve pedestrian and bicycle access in this area, we have discussed the possibility of constructing a sidewalk close to the base of the slope (as opposed to immediately adjacent to the roadway) with the Arlington Town Planner, Alan McClennen, Jr. This sidewalk would connect to the Minuteman Bikeway to the east and the Mugar parcel to the west. We will continue our discussions in the near future with Arlington town officials to further refine the project design in this area.

The MDPW is also looking at the technique of "soil bioengineering" to construct a vegetated slope in the Thorndike Field area in order to support the roadway, instead of a retaining wall. The use of both soil bioengineering or a low retaining wall are subject to the approval of the Federal Highway Administration.

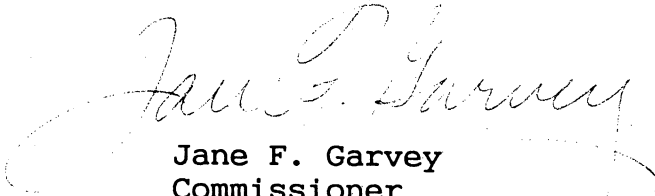
In response to your concerns regarding project construction, the project will not entail any construction on Town of Arlington streets. Aside from the portion of the project

discussed previously, very little of the construction associated with this entire project will actually occur in Arlington. On the south side of Route 2, the project entails reconstructing the Lake Street interchange (the abandoned MDC skating rink site). This will result in the creation of 4.4 acres of landscaped, publicly-accessible open space adjacent to Little Pond. We will also be improving pedestrian/bicycle access from Arlington to other existing open space in this area. The plan includes a pedestrian/bike way along the west side of Alewife Brook Parkway underneath Route 2 and a potential connection from the Minuteman Bikeway across Alewife Brook to the bikeway along the Parkway. In addition, we will be reconstructing the existing pedestrian bridge over Route 2 by the bowling alley to make this facility handicapped accessible.

Regarding your concerns about the safety of school children and local residents, according to the traffic analysis conducted for our Final Environmental Impact Statement/Report, average daily traffic on Lake Street in Arlington will not change perceptibly with or without the project. On any given street, traffic volumes tend to vary from the average daily level by plus or minus ten percent. In the design year with the project, average daily traffic on Lake Street will be about six percent greater than without the project. However, traffic that diverts to Lake Street in order to avoid Alewife will be reduced with the project, because it will be much quicker to travel through Alewife with the project than without the project.

If you would like any additional information regarding this project, please feel free to contact me or our manager for the Alewife project, Larry Berkowitz (973-8004).

Sincerely,


Jane F. Garvey
Commissioner

cc: Rep. M.J. Gibson
Rep. R.A. Havern
Sen. R.A. Kraus
Arlington Board of Selectmen
Arlington Advocate
Cambridge Board of Aldermen
Secretary Salvucci, EOTC

11. S-405

Comm. from Jane F. Garvey, Commissioner,
State Department of Public Works, regarding
the Route 2/Alewife Brook Parkway Project.

In City Council,

April 23, 1990

Placed on file