

THE HISTORIC PARKWAYS INITIATIVE

The Historic Parkway Initiative – a coalition of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), and other public and private organizations – is dedicated to the protection, preservation, and enhancement of historic parkways throughout the Commonwealth, now and into the future. Through advocacy, education, and action, and in the spirit of partnership, the Initiative will celebrate the invaluable scenic, cultural, recreational, and transportation roles of these remarkable parkways. A catalyst for change, the Initiative is building new models of revitalization and stewardship for the Commonwealth's treasured parkway resources. The Memorial Drive Historic Parkway Rehabilitation Project, an implementation project of the Charles River Basin Master Plan, has been identified as a Demonstration Project under the Initiative and is designed to highlight the goals of the initiative.

MEMORIAL DRIVE, AN HISTORIC PARKWAY IN THE CHARLES RIVER BASIN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Memorial Drive and the Cambridge Esplanade are key elements of the Charles River Basin National Register Historic District. This parkland encompasses the Drive, originally known as Charles River Road, in front of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The complete Esplanade was laid out and built as part of an ambitious private residential development intended to rival the Back Bay. The financial panic of 1893 ended this aspiration and the seawall, lawn, and park drives ended abruptly at Fowler Street. MIT moved from its original home in the Back Bay in 1916 and established a grand presence in the Basin on Memorial Drive. The broad lawn between today's eastbound and westbound ways of the Drive gives ample room for formal planting. Though designed for horse-drawn vehicles, the scale of the parkway, renamed Memorial Drive after World War I to honor the Cambridge men and women who lost their lives in the Great War, has not changed in more than a century.

Following the transfer of the Esplanade to the Metropolitan Parks Commission, a more modest Memorial Drive was extended westward towards the Cottage Farm Bridge and eventually to the Eliot Bridge. The extension is characterized by an undivided parkway and a more naturalistic riverbank since construction of the Charles River Dam in 1903 eliminated the need for seawalls.



HISTORIC PARKWAYS of MASSACHUSETTS

HISTORIC PARKWAYS INITIATIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

Betsy Shure Gross, Co-Chair
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

John DeVillars, Co-Chair
Brownfields Recovery Corporation

Geoffrey Beckwith
MA Municipal Association

Deirdre Buckley
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Stephen H. Burrington
Conservation Law Foundation

Vin Cipolla
Citizen Representative

John Cogliano
Massachusetts Highway Department

Buzz Constable, Esq.
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Linda Cox
Esplanade Association

Marilyn Fenollosa
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Representative Kevin W. Fitzgerald

Eliot Foulds
Olmsted Center, National Park Service

Susan W. Frechette
Department of Environmental Management

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Citizen Representative

Senator Robert A. Havern

Jamie Hoyte
Harvard University

Beppi Huidekuper
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James Igoe
Historic Massachusetts Inc.

Nathaniel Karns
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Cara Metz
Massachusetts Historical Commission

John Moot
Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods

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Cape Cod Commission

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Samantha Overton Bussell
Metropolitan District Commission

Paul Sacco
Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism

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Schlesinger & Associates

Cara Seiderman
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Cynthia Smith
Boston Society of Landscape Architects

Helen Spaulding
Citizen Representative

Representative Joseph C. Sullivan

Patrice Todisco
Boston Greenspace Alliance

Senator Marian Walsh

Representative Alice K. Wolf

Eileen Woodford
National Parks Conservation Association

Robert Zimmerman
Charles River Watershed Association

The Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the Metropolitan District Commission would like to acknowledge NSTAR and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for funding the design of the Memorial Drive Demonstration Project.

A HISTORIC PARKWAY OF MASSACHUSETTS

MEMORIAL DRIVE HISTORIC PARKWAY REHABILITATION

RE-CREATE *the* LEGACY

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

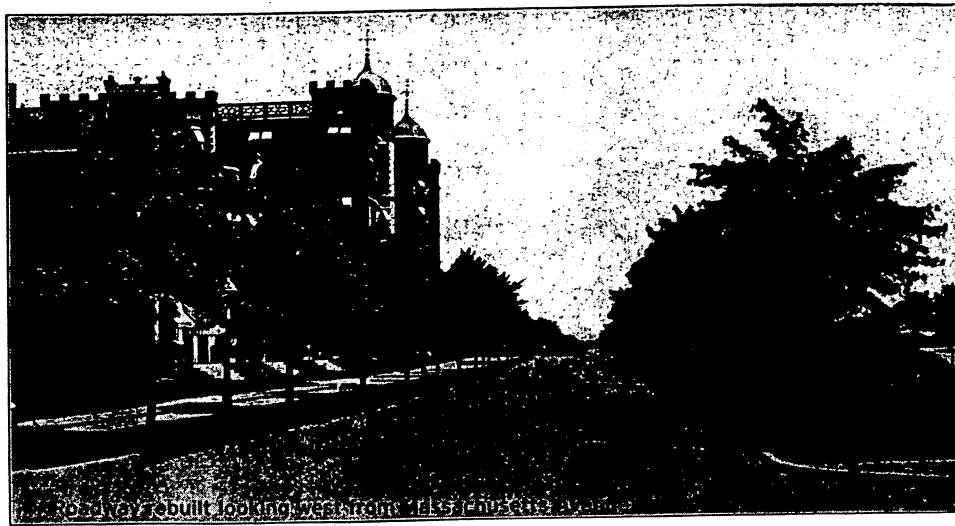
Jane M. Swift *Governor*

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Bob Durand *Secretary*

Metropolitan District Commission

David B. Balfour, Jr. *Commissioner*



City of Cambridge Park Department Annual Reports, 1912. Cambridge Historical Commission Archives

THE MEMORIAL DRIVE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

The Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the MDC selected the Memorial Drive Historic Parkway Rehabilitation Project as the MDC Demonstration Project for the Historic Parkways Initiative. Design of the project will be headed by the noted engineering consulting firm of Rizzo Associates, seconded by the distinguished landscape architecture firm of Brown, Richardson and Rowe. Civil engineers, cultural landscape specialists, bridge engineers, transportation and bicycle planners, arborists, and environmental specialists will lend their skills to a scope that addresses issues ranging from pavement and drainage design to pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle circulation issues, landscape and historic preservation, and natural resource protection.

PROJECT APPROACH

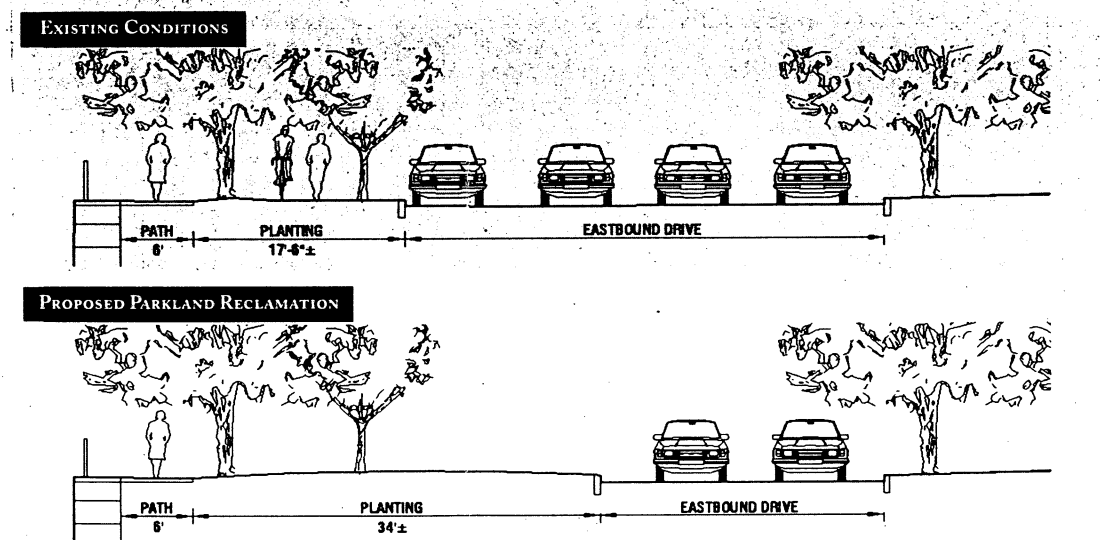
This demonstration project will implement important recommendations for the realignment of Memorial Drive as listed in the Charles River Basin Master Plan under "Cambridge Esplanade." The work will occur in two phases over two segments. Segment One extends from the Longfellow Bridge westward to the end of the divided parkway by Fowler Street. Segment Two continues westward to the Reid Overpass and Magazine Beach.

Design of both phases will begin immediately and Phase One construction is expected to commence in the Fall of 2002.

Phase One will consist of the civil engineering work necessary to remove an eastbound travel lane from the road, storm drainage improvement, pathway widening on the Viaduct, and improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Longfellow Bridge. It will also include critically needed repairs to the Massachusetts Avenue underpass, including a bridge deck replacement.

Phase Two is the subject of a lengthy design and community review process. It involves a comprehensive look at all the landscape and pathway issues from the Longfellow Bridge to Magazine Beach, including:

- Riverbank stabilization and landscaping improvements
- Historic landscape preservation
- Address pedestrian and bicycle pathway conflicts
- Installation of shelters, benches, and other amenities
- Improvements to pedestrian links to Magazine Beach
- Continuation of the existing historically appropriate lighting system



SCHEDULE

Meeting:	May 14, 2002	<i>Project Kick-Off</i>
Meeting:	June 26, 2002	<i>Second Public Meeting/Phase 1 Concept</i>
Event:	October 22, 2002	<i>Phase 1 Groundbreaking</i>
Meeting:	Fall 2002	<i>Phase 2 Concept</i>
Meeting:	January, 2003	<i>Phase 2 Design Development Public Meeting</i>
Event:	Spring, 2003	<i>Phase 2 Preferred Concept/Preconstruction Public Meeting</i>

MDC PROJECT TEAM

Francis Faucher *Deputy Commissioner for Technical Services*

Samantha Overton Bussell *Deputy Commissioner for Policy*

Julia O'Brien *Director of Planning*

Joe Orfant *Project Manager*

Patricia Provenzano *Director of Community Affairs*

CONTACT INFORMATION

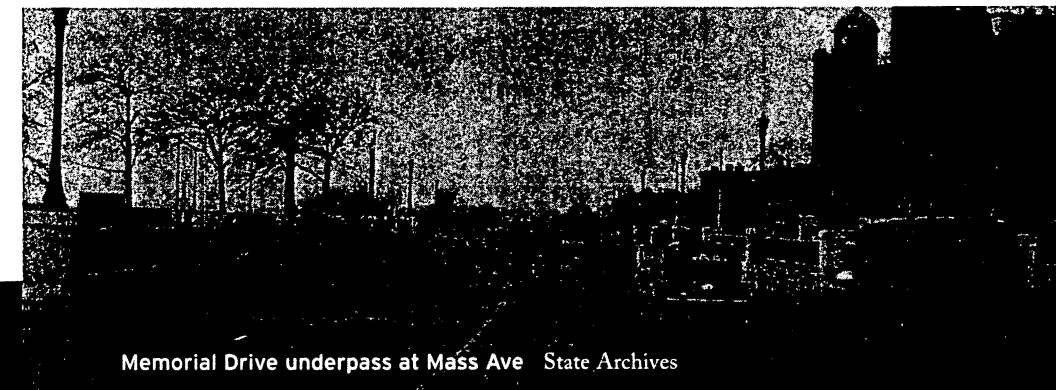
The MDC invites public comments and input on the project.

For more information and updates please contact:

Metropolitan District Commission *Community Affairs*

20 Somerset Street Boston, MA 02108

617-727-5114 x 530 www.mas.gov/mdc



Memorial Drive underpass at Mass Ave State Archives



13.

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:

In response to Awaiting Report Item Number 02-89, regarding a briefing on the Charles River Basin Master Plan, Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development reports the following:

The final report of the Charles River Basin Master Plan was completed in May 2002. The report is available on the website of the MDC at <http://www.state.ma.us/mdc/CRBasinHomepage.htm>

The first element of the Master Plan to be implemented will be the rehabilitation of Memorial Drive from the Longfellow Bridge to Fowler Street in Cambridge. The work is being undertaken by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), and will be carried out in two phases. Phase I involves reconstruction of the roadway, including narrowing the eastbound side to reclaim a large open space area, storm drainage improvements, pathway widening in the Viaduct, improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Longfellow Bridge, repairs to the Mass Avenue underpass, and signalization and other improvements to the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Memorial Drive. Phase I work is currently underway.

Phase II will involve riverbank stabilization and landscaping improvements, historic landscape preservation, pathway improvements, and shelter, benches and lighting improvements. Public meetings to discuss Phase II have begun and the next meeting is scheduled for January 2003 (specific date, place and time to be announced by the MDC).

The work on Memorial Drive is a demonstration project of the Historic Parkways Initiative. The Historic Parkways Initiative was created in 2001 to protect, preserve and enhance the historic parkways in Massachusetts. The Initiative is guided by a coalition of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), and other public and private organizations, including the City of Cambridge.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/dls

S-355

Consent Agenda #13

**Awaiting Report Item Number
02-89, regarding a briefing on
the Charles River Basin Master
Plan.**

In City Council November 25, 2002

**REFERRED TO PUBLIC
FACILITIES, ART AND
CELEBRATIONS
COMMITTEE.**

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