

ROXBURY

## City progresses with redesign of Dudley Square streets

Posted by Patrick Rosso

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The Boston Transportation Department's redesign of roadways and sidewalks around Roxbury's Dudley Square is progressing as the project now moves into discussions on the finer points of the redesign.

The Boston Transportation Department has been working since

October 2012 to improve flow and access in the square as part of its Complete Streets model, which aims to support safe streets for pedestrians, cyclists, cars, and public transit users.

On Monday night a small group of area residents, city officials, and urban design consultants met at the Dudley Square Branch Library to review the current progress of the project and begin the process of designing new streetscapes for the project area, roughly defined by Dudley Street, Washington Street, and Warren Street.

Currently the \$9-million project is at the 25-percent design completion phase. The project's timeline calls for it to be advertised by the end of 2013, with work projected to start in early-2014.

Although a design has not yet been completed, the draft plan calls for the rerouting of buses at Dudley Station to reduce travel times, the conversion of Washington Street into a two-way street, the installation of new amenities for pedestrians, the addition of a cycle track on Dudley Street, and other public realm improvements such as updated sidewalks, new benches, new trees, and added planters.

Designers said the improvements would help calm traffic, beautify the area, and make roads and sidewalks safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The current plan, however, would remove six parking spaces from the area to make way for improvements such as "bump-outs" at street crossings.

At Monday's meeting those in attendance concentrated on the design of the improvements, debating the type of light fixtures and the opportunities for public art.

"This is kind of like redesigning your kitchen and picking out the paints that match the best" explained Patrick Hoey, a senior planner with BTB.

From solar powered trash cans to ways to better design the proposed cycle track slated to run along Dudley Street, residents highlighted what they thought was important and should be integrated into the greater project.

"I really think instead of doing murals we should put the history of Roxbury in inscriptions," said Joanne Keith, a 30-year-old Roxbury resident. "There's a lot of history in this neighborhood that people don't know."

Sean Sanger, a landscape architect and principal with the Copley Wolff Design Group, a BTB consultant, discussed with neighbors the type of features that could be integrated in the plan.

Many called for art work around the square that would highlight the area's rich history and would help employ area youths. Others also called for amenities, such as light pole banners, that would help draw traffic and shoppers to the square.

Although Monday's group was small it is just the beginning of the conversation around streetscapes. Plans can also be viewed online and comments can be submitted via email.

At Monday's meeting designers emphasized the importance of the project and community input on its design, because of the large amount of development in the area including the redesign of Melnea Cass Boulevard, the redevelopment of the Ferdinand Furniture Building, the expansion of the Tropical Foods grocery store, and the potential development of a cycle track along Malcolm X Boulevard.

"The area really needs to be renovated to make it better for the people that live here, work here, and do business here," said Hoey. "There is a lot of opportunity here."

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