



Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

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March 31, 2003

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MEPA

James W. Hunt
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Review
251 Causeway Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114

Reference: North Point Commercial/Residential Development FEIR
EOEA Certificate #12650, dated 16 December 2002

Subject: Urban Ring Busway Variants at North Point Final Report

Dear Secretary Hunt,

We are submitting four (4) copies of the Final Report entitled "Urban Ring Busway Variants at North Point" in accordance with the requirements of EOEA Certificate No. 12650.

The MBTA, working with the Urban Ring Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), members of its Land Development Subcommittee and the North Point project developer (NPLC) explored three design options for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) busway linking the Community College Orange Line station and the relocated Lechmere Green Line station. The options included:

1. An alignment entirely within the MBTA's commuter rail yard
2. An alignment largely within the commuter rail yard, with a minor impingement on the NPLC site.
3. An alignment that impinges more deeply on the NPLC site, accompanied by an air rights development of parking garage structures over the MBTA rail yard.

The evaluation of the options took into consideration the following updated base mapping and survey information:

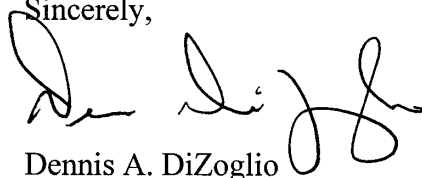
- MBTA Railroad Operations design plans for relocation of the Fitchburg Main Line and additional commuter rail storage tracks
- evaluation of costs and impacts
- and the requirement that "no new design shall decrease the overall density of the NPLC project, or redistribute the location of the development to the detriment of any of the three communities" of Boston, Cambridge, or Somerville.

The report concludes that only Variant 1 consisting of an elevated busway viaduct on MBTA property above the rail tracks and yard area and entering the North Point site at Water Street and impinging 5.5 feet into the development meets the standard of the MEPA certificate and is acceptable to the MBTA, NPLC and the municipalities. At its March 26, 2003 meeting, the Urban Ring CAC agreed that the MBTA's conclusion to proceed with Variant 1 was the most acceptable of the three options considered.

We understand that the report will be posted in the Environmental Monitor for public comment. The report will be available from the MBTA website at www.mbtta.com, Urban Ring North Point Busway Report. Comments should be addressed to Mr. Peter C. Calcaterra, Urban Ring Project Manager at pcalcaterra@mbta.com or by mail to MBTA Planning Department, 10 Park Plaza, Room 5750, Boston, MA 02116.

We look forward to continuing the Urban Ring Phase 2 environmental review process and completing the Draft EIR/S for this phase. If you have any questions on the matter feel free to contact me at 617-222-4292 or Mr. Calcaterra at 617-222-3366.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis A. DiZoglio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "Z".

Dennis A. DiZoglio
Assistant General Manager
for Planning and Real Estate

Attachment

Cc: LeAndrea Dames, MEPA
R. Duffy, Chairman Urban Ring CAC