

Mayor's Central Artery Completion Task Force

May 4, 2007

By Facsimile

Mr. Deerin Babb-Brott  
Assistant Secretary and  
Chief of the MEPA Unit  
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
100 Cambridge Street  
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Central Artery Parcel 13 Armenian Heritage Foundation Proposal of the  
Massachusetts Turnpike Authority

Dear Mr. Babb-Brott:

As you know, surface restoration of parcels acquired for the completion of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project are subject to the Joint Development Appendix of the FHWA Record of Decision. Joint development as described therein involves a tripartite process involving the city, the state and the public. The public for purposes of this process has been designated as the Mayor's Central Artery Completion Task Force and the neighborhood task forces which it has established. Under this regime the design of each park has begun with broad community discussion of programmatic goals and design guidelines and has proceeded through each design milestone. Each parcel designation has begun with the BRA's development of use and design guidelines with the community and their incorporation in a request for proposals.

The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority has followed neither of these processes in the case of Parcel 13. Instead it has designated a proposal sponsored by the Armenian Heritage Foundation which would commemorate the Armenian Holocaust, which occurred early in the twentieth century. In place of the tripartite process, representatives of the Armenian Heritage Foundation have conducted an extensive series of one-on-one meetings and presentations as well as several larger meetings with various groups and organizations. The most recent such meeting occurred on April 12, 2007 with the North End/Waterfront Residents' Association.

However, no such meeting has been made to the Mayor's Central Artery Completion Task Force. At a joint meeting of the North End and the Wharf District Central Artery Committees, and the Wharf District Neighborhood Task Force, the neighborhood committees established by the Task Force to review and advise on developer designations and land use designs in areas near those communities, this proposal received a very mixed reception. Since then, we have not received a request for a presentation to the Task Force.

In addition, the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy as well as this Task Force have gone on record as opposing the creation of any memorials along the Greenway for an initial period of five years after the opening of the initial parks. Most recently, on March 15, 2007, the Task Force advised the MTA pursuant to the attached letter, that the moratorium on the construction of memorials remains a firmly held view of the members of the Task Force. This view has been endorsed in writing by the chairs of the North End, Waterfront, Bulfinch Triangle and Leather District/Chinatown advisory committees.

Despite the joint development process and the opposition of the Task Force, the Conservancy and the neighborhood advisory committees to the construction of a memorial on Parcel 13, the MTA has announced another meeting and presentation by the Armenian Heritage Foundation on May 9, 2007 at the Nazzaro Community Center in the North End. We believe that the persistence of the MTA in this effort is contrary to the Record of Decision, the announced policies of this Task Force, the North End Central Artery Committee and the Conservancy, and the neighborhood advisory committees, and is ill advised. We therefore request that you issue to the MTA a letter indicating that the redevelopment of Parcel 13 should follow the established procedures which have applied to all other designations and designs along the Greenway.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,



Robert Tuchmann, Co-chair

RT:pmv

cc: Mr. Paul L. McCann, Acting Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Mr. Peter Meade, Chair, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy  
Mr. Robert O'Brien, Downtown North Association  
Ms. Nancy Caruso, North End Waterfront Central Artery Committee  
Ms. Susanne LaVoie, Wharf District Task Force  
Mr. Larry Rosenblum, Leather District Task Force  
Ms. Stephanie Fan, Chinatown Neighborhood Task Force  
Mr. Richard Garver, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Ms. Nancy Brennan, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy  
Mr. John Cogliano, Massachusetts Turnpike Authority