

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT A

From: Josie Patterson [josiep@MIT.EDU]
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2011 9:06 AM
To: Kelley, Craig (home)
Cc: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Re: Meeting this Thursday about the Magazine Beach footbridge and associated issues

Hi,
I can't make it to the meeting, but think that the backup of traffic on and around the BU bridge that develops from the light makes that whole area (the BU bridge area) even more of a snarl. The pedestrian bridge is for people to use to cross at that section. If it is properly lit, signed and welcoming, it will get used. I would try it out first before making another decision about a light.

Fewer choices are better in a cluttered landscape - I think.

And for those in the world who think lights help crossing, well, try sitting on Mass Ave. for an hour and watch how many people simply walk into oncoming traffic when the light is against them. I did this for a half hour last weekend while waiting for someone and was truly amazed at how many pedestrians ignored lights and crosswalks.

I think we need an ongoing public safety campaign for everyone, walkers, bikers, drivers, people on skateboards, rollerblades, etc. that directs people to be respectful of others, go slowly in congested areas, and obey traffic regulations. We live in a dense area with many different modes of transportation in use; everyone needs to take responsibility for being careful and making the safest choices possible.

Josie Patterson
9 Perry St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT B

From: JoAnne Ackman [joanneackman@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2011 9:39 AM
To: Kelley, Craig (home); Lopez, Donna
Subject: Re: Meeting this Thursday about the Magazine Beach footbridge and associated issues

I don't think I can make the meeting tomorrow night, but wanted to point out that over the years during the summer I've seen a lot of kids who use the MCD pool crossing Mem Dr. carelessly at inappropriate points, probably because they don't want to take the time to use the footbridge.

I had no idea that it costs hundreds of thousands of dollars to permanently install a new traffic light and agree that it's probably not worth the expenditure. I love the footbridge myself, but on the other hand the safety issue with summer crossings of Mem Dr. is a real concern.

Thanks - JoAnne Ackman
314 Pearl St.

Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2011 12:21 PM

To: Decker, Marjorie

Subject: Magazine Street traffic light at Memorial Drive.

ATTACHMENT C.

Dear Margie,

I will not be able to attend the Transportation Traffic and Parking Committee meeting on April 21, 2011. I would like to register my views with you and ask that you speak on my behalf.

I believe that the light is at Magazine Street and Memorial Drive advantageous to the Cambridgeport neighborhood. I would like see the light installed permanently.

Andrea Kontos

171 Magazine Street

Cambridge, MA02139

617-492-6330

From: Frank Shirley [fshirley@frankshirleyarchitects.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2011 9:02 PM
To: craigkelley62@Verizon.net
Cc: 'Katherine Gamble'; Lopez, Donna
Subject: Magazine Beach footbridge

Dear Councilor Kelley,

My wife, Katherine Gamble, and I are writing to voice our opposition to a traffic light (and a study of such a light) at the Magazine Beach footbridge. I have resided in Cambridgeport for 21 years, Katherine for 17 years. We have two elementary school-aged children, and two dogs. We have been and will continue to be frequent users of Magazine Beach. We either take our bikes or walk from our home, always using the footbridge. The old footbridge, despite its steep ramps, has always been a very safe way for all six of us to cross over Memorial Drive, no matter the traffic zooming by. The new bridge will only improve the ease of crossing.

The street light will NOT improve safety. In fact, we believe it will diminish safety because Memorial Drive is a very busy thoroughfare, with narrow lanes. With an exit, a vehicular overpass and a pedestrian bridge surrounding the proposed traffic light drivers will be distracted and sight lines obscured. An on-grade pedestrian crossing in this environment seems doomed to trouble. Further, the pedestrian bridge is directly across from an elementary school (where our kids attend). Classrooms sometimes go to the park. I would never want a chaotic group of elementary school kids tempted by the lure of a street crossing on Memorial Drive. The pedestrian bridge is by far the safer way for school children to move to and from the park.

And then there is the issue of cost. Why have we gone to the expense of building a new bridge if a street crossing is also going to be considered? Certainly we do not NEED both. And why consider a crosswalk now, when the bridge is well underway – it is too late to realize savings. And finally, the cost to study the traffic light and crosswalk is a misguided expense during a time when our city is fighting to control its budget amidst stagnant tax revenue and diminishing State and Federal funding.

Perhaps those arguing in favor of a traffic light do so because it aids them in making a left turn from Magazine Street. If so, in 21 years of residency in the 'port I have never taken a left from Magazine, and yet I have always managed to get where I needed to go. I believe other drivers can enjoy the same success, without a traffic light.

Respectfully,

Frank Shirley and Katherine Gamble
75 Henry Street

From: **Colleen Clark**
Sent: **Thursday, April 21, 2011 11:18 AM**
To: **craigkelley62@verizon.net; Lopez, Donna**
Subject: **Magazine Bridge, overpass and traffic light**

We are submitting these comments because we are unable to attend the meeting tonight, April 21. Please make them part of the official record.

We are opposed to removing the traffic light at the intersection of Magazine St. and Memorial Drive.

1. The overpass is not a satisfactory substitute for most pedestrians wishing to cross Memorial Drive.

When it was in place I (Colleen) used it only once. I would be crossing to reach the BU bridge to walk across. For an able-bodied pedestrian without wheels it's tediously long and so I have crossed under the overpass at the traffic circle at the end of Brookline St. With care this can be done safely by an individual, although it is less than ideal.

The traffic signal makes a street level crossing safe and convenient.

2. The traffic light also improves auto movement from Memorial Drive onto Magazine St. and from Magazine St. onto Memorial Dr.

Further, with the signal in place it becomes both legal and manageable to turn left onto Memorial Dr.

In the past, drivers occasionally ignored the "No Left Turn" sign. That is not safe.

Now that drivers have become accustomed to being able to turn left removing that possibility will likely lead to even more frequent flouting of the rule, if the traffic signal is removed.

3. Some have said that the MDC or the state or whoever wants to "improve traffic flow" along Memorial

Drive to relieve congestion on Storrow Dr.

This is a terrible idea. More traffic on Memorial Drive will lead to even more traffic. We do not need a highway along the river.

Speeds will increase and further endanger pedestrians living in Cambridge.

To our knowledge, there have been a number of deaths to MIT students crossing Memorial Dr. Anything that increases traffic and speeds along Memorial Dr. will only increase pedestrian risks the whole length of the Drive.

We were undergraduates at Harvard in the early 1960's when there was a plan on the drawing board to put the MA Turnpike Extension along the river on the Cambridge side. It took years of activism to prevent that from happening. While the traffic signal at Magazine St. is only one of many signals along Memorial Dr. it should be retained in the interests of the public who should have easy and safe access to the river and who have no need to have more and faster traffic going on Memorial Dr.

4. Someone said that no one wants to spend the money for a traffic analysis.

There must be data available about the number of traffic incidents etc before and after the installation

of the traffic signal. We should be able to use existing data to help inform this decision.

Thank you for attention. Please pay attention to the interests of the residents of Cambridge.

Colleen Clark
James Cox (lifelong resident of Cambridge)
21 William St., 02139
617 354-3482

From: Walter McDonald [waltermcdonald40@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2011 7:37 AM
To: craigkelley62@Verizon.net
Cc: Lopez, Donna; Clippinger, Sue; City Manager
Subject: Magazine Street Memorial Drive Traffic Light

Dear Craig:

We were unable to attend the meeting of the Transportation and Parking Committee Meeting on April 21, 2011, but we want to have our comments added for your consideration:

We live on Magazine Street, two blocks from Memorial Drive. We are definitely in favor of keeping the traffic light at this intersection.

Over time, we have discovered how useful the light is for both automobile and pedestrian traffic:

- Traffic heading south on Magazine Street is not forced to go down Granite Street past the Morse School into the whirlpool of traffic at the BU Bridge rotary. The current light at this intersection affords drivers protected left and right turns onto Memorial Drive. For residents of Cambridgeport heading east beyond the BU Bridge, this light allows access to Mem Drive without our having to enter the rotary.
- For some drivers heading east on Mem Drive, the light provides a protected left turn onto Magazine Street. It's now much safer than the turn at Riverside Road into the Microcenter lot and out onto Magazine St.
- Without the light, pedestrians, especially joggers and children, are tempted to cross Mem Drive, rather than use the footbridge. It's likely that this temptation will be exacerbated when the new and considerably longer footbridge is completed.
- In retrospect, a traffic light would have been a much more reasonable than any footbridge, as a solution to this traffic and crossing problem. And there would not be any risk of trucks damaging the structure.
- Any final resolution of this issue should consider the BU Bridge traffic after that bridge reconstruction has been completed. Perhaps, the Magazine St. light should remain at this intersection as a test to determine how it contributes to solution of the B.U. Bridge traffic also.. At last public DCR report, the plans for traffic management for that rotary were not final. However, the tentative plans they had proposed gave no hope that the near constant logjam at that location would be mitigated.