

## Mount Vernon Street Design Community Workshop March 27, 2014 Notes Sumarized By Topic Area

The following are highlights from breakout group discussions conducted at the Mt. Vernon Street Design Community Workshop held at the Corcoran Mullens Jennison Community Building on March 27, 2014.

### Activity

- More retail destinations
- Add activity to street to slow down traffic
- Activity at night: commercial/ retail businesses to improve public safety
- Opportunities: Utilize existing parking lots for pop-up activities
  - o St. Christopher's church parking lot for Farmer's Market
  - o Open area west of Double Tree Hotel: food trucks, food kiosks, other installations

### Bus Stops

- Problem: got rid of bus stop at Harbor Point Blvd
  - o Senior population that needs close stops
- Consolidate bus stops; Reconsider bus stop locations
- Integrate systems- coordinate transit systems with UMass shuttles
- Better/new seating at bus stops
- Lighting at bus stops
- Bus shelter as public art

### Congestion

- The Chute (Morrissey)
- In front of Dever School
- At Harbor Point Blvd (Harbor Point entrance)
  - o Opportunity: Left turn only lane
- UMass Campus
  - o Add another entrance/exit not on Mt. Vernon to relieve traffic

### Connectivity

- Goal: Stronger multi-modal connection between JFK Station, Harborwalk and Mt. Vernon
- Goal: Make Mt. Vernon a Complete Street
- Problem: No bike connection along DCR section of Mt. Vernon and T Station and Harborwalk
- Upgrade JFK/UMass Station



- Open up Mt. Vernon to Harbor Point
  - o Problem: Single entrance causes traffic congestion, community cut off from street activity
    - Beach Point and Westwind streets– create pedestrian/ bike entrance

## Crosswalks

- Problem: Safety
  - o “Walking signs” for safety (pedestrian crossing signs?)
  - o Pedestrian signals
  - o Raised crosswalks for traffic calming, especially near schools
  - o Pedestrian neck downs/ curb extensions
    - West side of Double Tree hotel
    - Harbor Point Blvd
    - South Point
    - Sites with schools/childcare
  - o Need mid-block crossings
    - Add crosswalk at Youth Center to parking lot
    - Add crosswalk at South Point Drive (UMass students live at Harbor Point)
- Problem: Difficult pedestrian access to T Station
  - o Single-shot crosswalk instead of 2
    - Widen sidewalk on south side of street
  - o Make existing crosswalks more legible
    - Opportunity: Artistic crosswalks
- Problem: BC High students cross Morrissey Blvd illegally by Santander

Introduce colors and materials to “public way”

- Paving treatment for the school zone area/ crossing

## Cycle Track

- Problem: Cycle track ends where DCR section picks up, not pleasant to bike along
- Problem: current bike lane paint not working, unsafe
  - o Need: Safe biking accommodations
  - o Cyclist access at intersections (Netherlands example)
  - o Connection for bikes to JFK T Station
  - o Clearly distinguish from vehicular road lane
    - Opportunity: Implement temporary cycle track
- Separate cyclists and vehicles, pedestrians
  - o Bollards, trees
  - o If at street grade, pedestrians intuitively don’t walk there
  - o Design is critical – connection to adjacent uses is more important than grade level
  - o Should the cycle track be on both sides of the street?
- Bike focus along shore line/ Harborwalk
- Snow plowing consideration



## Identity

- Gateway opportunities:
  - o Either side of underpass, T Station
  - o JFK/UMass Station as a transit portal
  - o “Welcome to Columbia Point” sign
- Rebranding as neighborhood
- Public Art as a Gateway
  - o Opportunity: explore opportunities with Santander’s open space
- Renovate Pump Station- make a destination/ focal point

## Intersections

- Near Underpass
  - o Problem: Worst place to walk, safety issues
  - o Improve signal timing/ pedestrian crossing
- Morrissey Blvd
  - o Problem: awkward to cross/ hard to see oncoming cars in the on-ramps
  - o Too busy
  - o Light cycle too long
  - o Good: some pedestrian refuges

## Lighting

- Problem: Safety
  - o Decorative lighting at underpass
    - Opportunity for temporary installation
  - o More lighting to and from T Station for pedestrians
  - o Better street lights
  - o Lighting in parking lots at Santander
- Harbor Point is dark, uninviting from Mt. Vernon

## Parking

- Problem: lack of short-term parking but abundance of lots for specific businesses/institutions
  - o Short-term parking added in front of health center on north side
  - o On-street parking needed by Youth Center
  - o More on-street parking in general
  - o Preserve parking for Harborwalk, short-term parking for Harborwalk by horseshoe at UMass

## Pick-up/Drop Off locations

- Problem: current conflict with bike lanes, on-street parking, driving lanes
- Locations:
  - o Denney Youth Center
  - o From Dever School to South Point Blvd
- U-Turn or drop off



## Sidewalks

- Problem: condition of sidewalks, wheelchair access
- Need to be wider
- Use one side for cycle track and one side for pedestrians
- Get rid of sidewalk on north side of street from the Chute to the Double Tree → route pedestrian traffic on the south side and widen sidewalks.

## Safety

- Consider safety for school children:
  - o Better signals
  - o LED school zone signage
  - o “School Ahead” signs starting at Double Tree/Banco Santander
- Crosswalks
- Bikes / vehicles/ pedestrian interaction
- Traffic speed

## Streetscape

- Goal: Create strong pedestrian environment
- Goal: Break up boring, long, linear feel of street
- Problem: Street is not inviting
- Activate the street level
  - o Make schoolyard more pronounced, more beautiful
  - o Improve school facades
  - o Benches needed by bus stops and crosswalks
  - o Community board/ kiosk, café
  - o Problem: Parking lots at Santander/ Hotel create vacant gaps
  - o Problem/ Opportunity: Area by McCormack baseball field
    - More furniture
    - Activate gap between McCormack and Apartment building (by playground) with park seating
- Street trees/ landscaping
  - o Problem: shrubs in front of Hotel are not friendly
    - Opportunity: Parklet idea, café, water feature
  - o Problem: street is barren, shade is needed
  - o Opportunity: Vertical/green walls, variety of plantings
- Interactive public art
  - o JFK, EMK, Archive, T Station
  - o Signage, art and lighting along wall that supports underpass
  - o Spaces by Banco Santander and Double Tree, underpass, Harbor Point

## Traffic Speed

- Problem: need to reduce speeds
- Opportunity: Reduce lane widths



## Wayfinding

- Harborwalk wayfinding and signage:
  - o Highlight Harborwalk from T Station
  - o It should have a direct tie to university and museums
- Orientation kiosks:
  - o At T Station, wayfinding at T
  - o At JFK Library/ UMass
  - o Near Harborwalk path
- Trivia/ history along sidewalks on Mt. Vernon
- Reinforce connections to institutions – JFK / UMass
- Help promote walking
  - o Express time in minutes, length of walk

