

## State Street Advisory Group Meeting Notes

March 4, 2020

GPI Project #: MAX-2017041.05

DATE PREPARED: March 9, 2020

LOCATION: Room 900  
Boston City Hall

The following notes summarize the main points of the discussion.

ATTENDEES: Greg Galer, Boston Preservation Alliance  
Brendan Kearney, Walk Boston  
Thomas Nally, A Better City  
Kevin Glynn, Rose Kennedy Greenway  
Ed Reynolds, Custom House Resident  
Ruth Raphael, National Park Service  
Suzanne Taylor, Freedom Trail Foundation

STAFF: Para Jayasinge, Public Works Department  
Zach Wassmouth, Public Works Department  
Ashley Biggins, Public Works Department  
William Moose, Boston Transportation Department  
Al Vilar, Boston Transportation Department  
Jim Fitzgerald, BPDA  
Joe Johnson, GPI  
Carolyn Radisch, GPI

PURPOSE: Advisory Group Meeting

Ashley Biggins welcomed the group and provided introductions. Carolyn Radisch provided an overview of the traffic conditions on State Street including vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle counts; Origin and Destination data collected via cell data (StreetLight); and drone video of the State Street / JFF Surface Road intersection collected during the morning peak hour (8:30 am) on Monday February 24, 2020. The meeting was then opened up to a general discussion. The discussion focused on the traffic patterns noted in the video. The video revealed the following:

- Cars treat State Street as one lane at this location, although the pavement is undefined and very wide. Some drivers know the patterns and cut in.
- During the AM peak hour, vehicles on State Street are primarily originating from the southbound right turn off of the Surface Road. Occasionally the right turning vehicles would queue up the Surface Road.
- The Surface Road to State Street right turn conflicts with crossing pedestrian and bicyclist traffic. There is a concurrent pedestrian phase with a leading pedestrian interval (LPI).
- There is not a pedestrian bump-out on the NW corner of intersection probably due to the tour bus parking zone immediately adjacent to the corner on State Street.
- The only observed congestion, and temporary creation of two-lanes on State Street, stemmed from a double-parked vehicle at the pinch point.
- There are two westbound travel lanes on State Street between the Surface Road and Atlantic Avenue which could possibly be reduced to one lane.

**Discussion:**

**Greg Galer:**

- Can't make recommendations based on one sample of traffic volumes. This doesn't take into account events that cause backups.

**Suzanne Taylor:**

- Uber and Lyft drop-off and pick up cause backups.
- Suzanne also noted that a car making a U-Turn on State and traveling the wrong way has been observed. She asked about one-way signage in the vicinity of the Surface Road.

**Tom Nally:**

- The west crossing of State Street at Broad is a difficult crossing because of the two directions of conflicting traffic, left-turning traffic from Broad and through traffic from State Street.

**Brendan Kenney**

- Rather than an exclusive pedestrian phase to address the conflict between right turning traffic and pedestrians and bicycles, a similar situation was encountered on Prospect and Mass Ave in Central Square in Cambridge and it was decided to utilize a LPI and a flashing yellow arrow for right turning traffic. The analysis of an exclusive pedestrian phase resulted in long delays and queues. He will send the link to the information.
- City staff indicated that an exclusive pedestrian phase was considered at the State St/Surface Road intersection. It was found that the exclusive ped phase was only warranted during the the AM peak hour and not during the remainder of the day. The City decided to maintain the concurrent phasing with an LPI.

It was suggested that a pilot of a reduced width on State Street would be interesting to see how the traffic worked. Improved lane use markings along the southbound approach of the Surface Road could also be implemented.

It was noted that the April meeting would involve a discussion regarding loading and curbside use and we anticipate looking a draft street design alternatives in May.

**The meeting was adjourned at 6:30.**