



WalkBoston

PRESS RELEASE

WalkBoston Takes Action against Pedestrian – Unfriendly Development Along the Rose Kennedy Greenway at the Intercontinental Hotel/500 Atlantic Avenue August 25, 2005

Contact: Wendy Landman, Executive Director (617) 367-9255
Notice of Project Change and Diagrams available at: www.walkboston.org
Comments Due: September 13, 2005

WalkBoston has taken action to prevent the developers of the Intercontinental Hotel/500 Atlantic Avenue project (Extell) from constructing a pedestrian walkway that violates guidelines established by City, State and community groups for a safe, accessible and walkable corridor along the Rose Kennedy Greenway above the depressed Central Artery Project (CA/T). WalkBoston filed a Notice of Project Change with the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs MEPA Office to give the public an opportunity to comment on the developer's walkway design.

“The pedestrian environment planned by the developer for the Intercontinental Hotel/500 Atlantic is not acceptable for this important part of the Rose Kennedy Greenway,” said Wendy Landman, WalkBoston's Executive Director. “Cars will occupy the entire space where the sidewalk should be, and pedestrians will be forced to circle onto the hotel's private property, behind building columns and beneath the building's upper stories, into the hotel entrance area, dodging luggage carts and hotel patrons. This is the first new project along the Rose Kennedy Greenway. As presently designed, it will set a terrible precedent, but we believe that there are alternative designs that can meet the needs of pedestrians and serve the hotel's patrons.”

WalkBoston filed a Notice of Project Change (NPC) with MEPA that was published in the August 24, 2005 Environmental Monitor. This provides for a period of public comment on the 500 Atlantic Avenue sidewalk design changes that have occurred since the developer's environmental documents were filed with the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. A complete copy of the NPC and accompanying diagrams are available at:
http://www.walkboston.org/projects/current_efforts.htm

Guidelines governing the final design of the surface streets and sidewalks above the CA/T Project were developed in 1995 by the Surface Transportation Action Forum (STAF), which was jointly chaired by the City of Boston, the CA/T Project, Move Massachusetts 2000, and WalkBoston. The resulting STAF Consensus Plan documents specific agreements about the design and functions of the streets and sidewalks along the Rose Kennedy Greenway corridor. The STAF Plan was filed jointly by the CA/T and the City of Boston with the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, who approved the Plan. Any changes require public notice and comment through a Notice of Project Change.

Those wishing to comment on the issues covered by the NPC should write to: Secretary Stephen Pritchard, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, MEPA Office, 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114. Comment letters are due to MEPA by September 13, 2005.

WalkBoston is a non-profit pedestrian advocacy organization committed to keeping Boston one of the country's best walking cities.

MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES MORE WALKABLE

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