



News from A Better City

Fall 2012

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ABC's Blog



[Stay Safe on the Road: See and Be Seen](#)

11-13-2012 09:04:10 AM

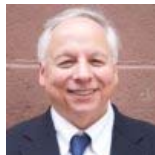
The days are getting shorter, we've turned the clocks back, and the first snow of the season has fallen. At this time of year, awareness and visibility on the roads are key to staying safe - whether you bike, drive, or walk...»

[Election Day: Where do the presidential candidates stand on ABC's core issues?](#)

11-05-2012

11:32:10 AM

Greetings!



Life is slowly returning to normal for residents of New York and New Jersey in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Our thoughts are with those affected by the storm. As we noted [on our blog last week](#), Sandy has shone a bright light on the deficiencies of our aging infrastructure to cope with extreme weather

events that may become the new normal due to climate change.

We at ABC often talk about the [need to invest in transportation and sustainability to foster economic growth](#). But after Sandy, the stakes are even higher. Of course, investing in infrastructure is not inexpensive - except when compared to cost of doing nothing. That's an important lesson to keep in mind at the Commonwealth begins to grapple with the question of transportation finance in the next legislative session. We need to plan ahead for a transportation [system that will address the impacts of climate change and extreme storms for future generations](#) - as we've learned that the risks and the economic costs are substantial.

Looking ahead to the new year, we'll continue our advocacy surrounding this question of transportation finance. We also look back on our achievements from this fall and all of this year. We're especially pleased with the expansion of our [Young Leaders program](#), which instills in our rising leaders an appreciation for the value of investment in transportation, land development, and the environment. We also look back with pride on our [2012 Norman B. Leventhal Awards](#), where we were honored to host U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

We're pleased to share the latest updates on our work below, and we look forward to continuing with this portfolio of work into 2013.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Dimino
President & CEO

Transportation

This election cycle's "October Surprise" turned out to be a superstorm named Sandy. In addition to wreaking havoc on the Northeast and making strange political bedfellows, the storm and its destruction have brought climate change and infrastructure investment to the forefront of the political conversation...»

[The Delmar Loop: Infrastructure for](#)

[Sustainable](#)

[Growth](#)

10-30-2012

14:01:11 PM

ABC was recently in St. Louis, on business, and while we were there we saw firsthand the impact that civic engagement and infrastructure investment can make in an urban neighborhood...»

[Small Business, Big Rewards: Bringing](#)

[Sustainable](#)

[Business](#)

[Operations to Boston's Main Streets](#)

10-23-2012

09:05:04 AM

One of the best perks of expanding ABC's Sustainability to small businesses in the City of Boston's Main Streets program is...»

[Virtual Tour: Broad Street Gets](#)

[a Makeover](#)

10-15-2012

09:47:28 AM

We've written in this space about the Crossroads Initiative, the City of Boston's effort to remake several major thoroughfares in the city to accommodate all road users and better connect neighborhoods...»

[ABC's 2012 Norman B.](#)

Longfellow Bridge Construction

ABC staff and consultants have been reviewing the status of the [Longfellow Bridge project](#) and the Design/Build procurement process currently underway. Through our [Transportation & Construction Committee](#) chaired by Chris Maher of Delaware North Companies, we have reviewed the Construction Sequencing and Traffic Engineering plans in the Request for Proposals issued to the Design Build Entities and generated a list of questions to be addressed by MassDOT staff concerning vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle uses of the Longfellow Bridge and its approaches in Boston and Cambridge during construction. After MassDOT selects the Design Build Entity, meetings will be scheduled with ABC and other stakeholders to review traffic management concerns to help the entity to create a comprehensive traffic management plan and develop a communications plan to keep our members and the public informed.

Fairmount Indigo Line

The [Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative Corridor-wide Advisory Group](#) met on October 10 to discuss next steps in the planning process. Members of the Advisory group will tour the corridor next week. The Boston Redevelopment Authority, conveners of the group, is planning to hold a corridor-wide Community Forum on Saturday morning, November 17 at the Salvation Army Kroc Community Center, near Uphams Corner in Dorchester. Discussion about that Forum and methods for ensuring good participation among corridor residents and businesses was the principal topic of the October 10 meeting.

ABC will contact businesses in the corridor involved in the [Boston Main Streets Challenge for Sustainability](#) program and encourage them to participate in the Community Forum. The BRA is currently developing the details of the Forum. If you would like more information as it is available, please contact ABC Planning Director Thomas Nally who represents ABC on the Corridor-wide Advisory Group.

Transportation Learning Clusters

With MassDOT developing a transportation finance plan in January, ABC's [Transportation Finance & Policy Committee](#) chaired by Doug McGarrath of Foley Hoag and other advocates are gearing up for a debate about paying for the transportation system we want and need. Along with Northeastern University and the Conservation Law Foundation, ABC participated in a series of "learning clusters" that brought the organizers of transportation finance campaigns in other cities to Boston to share lessons learned. ABC hosted a small-group session for the business community with leaders from Los Angeles and Atlanta and co-hosted a meeting with elected officials with representatives from New York and Kansas. ABC was also part of a [delegation that visited St. Louis](#) to learn about their successful transit ballot initiative.

Green Line Extension

The [Green Line Extension project](#) has moved out of design and into the early phases of construction. The GLX project is legal commitment of an air quality mitigation agreement attached to the Big Dig, but it is already behind schedule. In order to compensate for the full completion date being pushed back into 2019, the project is now being envisioned as a series of phases. Project leader Mary Ainsley characterized the project as really two projects: the relocation of the Fitchburg commuter rail tracks within the existing right-of-way, and then laying the new tracks for the Green Line. As daunting as the logistical challenges are, the biggest obstacle to completing the project is the dire financial condition of the MBTA. As Mary put it, 2013 will be the year of the Green Line: unless the Commonwealth can resolve the larger transportation finance crisis, the GLX may find itself without federal funds. Our [Project Development Committee](#) and chair Jim Keefe of Trinity Financial continue to track developments along this front.

[Leventhal Awards](#)

10-09-2012

10:52:08 AM

What a fantastic event Tuesday night! Our second annual Norman B. Leventhal awards ceremony was a huge success. We were so honored to host the U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood...>

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[BLOG](#)

Land Development

[Changes Along the Greenway](#)

The [ABC Greenway Abutters Committee](#), co-chaired by Bud Ris of the New England Aquarium and Brian Chaisson of Tishman Speyer, met in September to review recently enacted legislation the made changes to the Business Improvement District legislation and modifies the composition of the Greenway Conservancy's Board. The committee also discussed the [Conservancy's Business Plan](#) for FY2014 to FY2018 submitted to MassDOT in response to a request from Secretary of Transportation Richard Davey. MassDOT is evaluating renewal of the lease agreement and alternative budgets with the Conservancy to replace the current lease that expires in June 2013.

[South Boston Waterfront](#)

The [South Boston Stakeholders Committee](#) chaired by Jim Rooney of the MCCA met Wednesday, Oct. 10 to hear presentations from Commonwealth Ventures' Dick Galvin and State Street's Jennifer Settle regarding State Street's new development at Channel Center; from the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Richard McGuinness and Massport's Andrew Hargens about water transportation in Boston Harbor; and from MassDOT's Kate Fichter about the South Station Expansion.

[South Station Expansion](#)

ABC's Project Development Committee participates in the planning and implementation of various transit and highway infrastructure projects located in the Commonwealth. Our most recent meeting addressed permitting and engineering for the expansion of South Station. The main goal of the project is to expand capacity at South Station to accommodate future commuter, intercity and high-speed rail. An ancillary benefit of the project will be streetscape improvements and real estate development opportunities around the station.

Environment

[Challenge for Sustainability](#)

2013 is almost here and ABC wants you to join your fellow members. We have a goal of hitting the 75 property mark and only have 15 to go! Challenge participants work closely with ABC's [Sustainability & Climate Change Committee](#), co-chaired by Mike Mooney and Rick Mattila. Benefits of participation in the Challenge include:

- Networking and sharing best practices in Sustainability
- Benchmarking and setting goals for improvement
- Dedicated concierge assistance from ABC staff
- Attracting tenants, employees and customers
- Identifying cost savings
- Positive work culture for employees
- Satisfaction from doing the right thing for the environment

Join Now or [contact Megan Ramey](#) (mramey@abettercity, 617-502-6247) for more information.

[ABC's September Board Meeting](#)

It was a homecoming of sorts when ABC welcomed former Boston Properties executive (and ABC Young Leader) Brian Swett to [speak to our Board in his new role as Boston's Chief of Environment and Energy](#). Brian reported on some of the City's climate change initiatives of which ABC is a part, including the

work of the Green Ribbon Commission and the proposed benchmarking program that would measure the energy efficiency of commercial real estate. ABC and our Sustainability & Climate Change Committee look forward to working closely with Brian in his new role, as we did with his predecessor Jim Hunt.

MassDOT & Mode Shift

ABC was on hand at South Station October 9 as Transportation Secretary Richard Davey announced a new policy initiative to triple the share of travel in the Commonwealth by walking, biking and transit by 2030. The Mode Shift goal, a first nationwide, is aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion while improving public health. ABC and the [ABC TMA](#) received a briefing this summer on the initiative, and we look forward to working with MassDOT to achieve the goal not only by encouraging transit, walking and biking but also by encouraging carpools and vanpools that reduce single-occupancy car travel. We also hope MassDOT uses this policy goal to direct investment so that commuters have the transportation options to make smart transportation choices.

