



News from A Better City

Spring 2012

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ABC's Blog



[Happy Trails: An Exit Interview with Boston's Bike Czar](#)

04-17-2012

08:51:26 AM

Boston's biking community was saddened to learn late last month that Nicole Freedman, the director of Boston Bikes, was leaving at the end of April. There's a lot of uncertainty...»

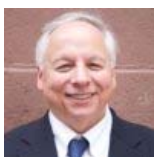
[ABC: A Legacy of Civic Engagement](#)

04-10-2012

08:02:07 AM

ABC President Richard Dimino recently returned from making a presentation at the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design Conference. In his keynote address...»

Greetings!



Spring has found its way to ABC. Our staff is excited for food truck lunches along the Greenway and more pleasant morning bicycle commutes. We also continue with our [portfolio of services, policy analysis, and advocacy](#) on behalf of our member businesses and institutions and are planning a full schedule for our [ABC committee meetings](#) throughout the spring months. Our Board meeting this quarter will feature guest speaker Peter Meade of the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

I recently returned from making a [presentation](#) at the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design Conference, speaking to an international audience on "Transportation, Urban Design, and Civic Engagement." Examples from the Central Artery/Tunnel Project and ABC's other [transportation projects](#) helped to illustrate ideas for incorporating the best urban design principles and strategies into Hong Kong's future infrastructure development.

We're extremely pleased that our [ABC blog](#) is picking up momentum. We launched the blog with a multi-part series on the MBTA fare and service changes. We've now added posts related to our primary focus areas of transportation, land development, and the environment. Please use the links on the left to visit the blog for an exit interview with Boston bike czar Nicole Freedman; a history lesson on ABC's legacy of civic engagement; and an overview of how we are working to help "activate" the Greenway as a public space.

We wish you a pleasant springtime and look forward to keeping you up to date on the latest in transportation, land development, and the environment.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Dimino
President & CEO

Transportation

[MBTA Fare & Service Changes](#)

Our campaign to influence the MBTA fare and service changes for the

[Sizing Up the T's](#)

["Scenario 3"](#)

04-02-2012

09:37:29 AM

Last week, officials at the T unveiled what will likely be their final proposal for closing their budget deficit for the coming fiscal year. It's expected that the MBTA board will vote on the proposal at their meeting April 4. The broad outlines of "Scenario 3" bear a striking resemblance to what ABC called for [...].[»](#)

[A Better City Transportation Management Association Is Growing](#)

03-28-2012

10:27:07 AM

ABC TMA: Taking the work out of getting to work Since 1996, ABC TMA has assisted employees with their commutes to work by providing...[»](#)

[Springtime Along the Greenway](#)

03-21-2012

10:10:38 AM

A look at some of ABC's land development priorities that are picking up steam this year...[»](#)

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economic benefit of Greater Boston has been underway since the new year. After conducting a series of focus groups to collect feedback on how the MBTA's proposed scenarios would affect our member businesses and institutions, we published a [position paper](#) in March suggesting a reduced schedule of service cuts and a fare increase of no more than 25%. We also hosted a [Business Community Briefing](#) on these impacts, drawing an audience of over 100 influential business and government leaders. We were pleased when the MBTA recently released "[Scenario 3](#)," calling for minimal service cuts and an average 23% increase in fares. We recognize that this is only a short-term fix, however, and continue to advocate for legislative involvement to implement a [longer-term solution to transportation finance](#) in the Commonwealth.

Longfellow Bridge

The rehabilitation of the [Longfellow Bridge](#), the signature project in the state's Accelerated Bridge Program, reached a major milestone with the release of the Federal Highway Administration's Environmental Assessment (EA) on the project. ABC attended and testified at a public meeting on the EA, held at MassDOT on March 1. ABC is generally in favor of the proposed lane configurations for the bridge - one lane out to Cambridge, two splitting to three coming into Charles Circle - and of other aspects of the project which will increase the amount of usable parkspace in the Esplanade. The project also includes a new, wider pedestrian bridge over Storrow Drive, which will further enhance the public's access to the Esplanade.

Land Development

Boston Public Market

Building on its white paper project examining the proposals for a new [Boston Public Market](#), the ABC Young Leaders group hosted a special luncheon with Donald Wiest, the head of the organization that's been selected to run the new year-round market on the Greenway. Don's presentation included discussion of the proposed merchandising mix to support a year-round market and of the participatory shopping experience that will make a visit to the market unique.

Crossroads Initiative

We continue to see tangible progress on the [Crossroads Initiative](#) from our headquarters here on Broad Street. This week witnessed the planting of a row of beautiful trees, which will grow in to create a magnificent boulevard connecting downtown Boston with the South Boston Waterfront. We look forward to keeping you informed about future developments with this project as they unfold before our very eyes.

Environment

2012 Challenge for Sustainability

Our hugely popular [Challenge for Sustainability](#) has been growing rapidly into the Main Streets neighborhoods of Boston. To welcome our new members and to honor current program participants who have achieved exceptional results in progress towards sustainable business practices, we spent a beautiful March evening "[Toasting to Success in Sustainability](#)," where our team presented awards to benchmark businesses and institutions. We also continue to host monthly roundtables on sustainability topics, including [Building Your Own Green Fair](#) and [Energy Efficiency for Small Businesses](#).

Sustainability & Climate Change Committee

ABC's [Sustainability & Climate Change Committee](#) hosted Mark Sylvia,

Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER), at its March quarterly meeting. Mr. Sylvia provided an update on several key DOER initiatives that directly impact ABC members, including the development of the next set of three-year energy efficiency plans and the Building Asset Labeling pilot program. The draft three-year plans from the utilities are due to the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council in April. The EEAC includes S&CC Committee co-chair Rick Mattila as a representative from the commercial real estate sector.

ABC TMA Expansion

Since 1996, [our ABC TMA](#) has assisted employees with their commutes to work by providing comprehensive programs and services that encourage public transit, ridesharing, biking and walking. ABC TMA currently serves over 80,000 commuters in the downtown and Back Bay areas of Boston. Through a generous grant from the Barr Foundation, the TMA has launched an [expansion to serve businesses and buildings in the Fenway, Kenmore, Allston, and Brighton neighborhoods](#). The Boston Red Sox hosted our kickoff meeting of this group at historic Fenway Park, where Transportation Commissioner Thomas Tinlin discussed the important role that TMAs serve in Boston.

