August 6, 2007
Questions and Responses from Harvard Allston Task Force Meeting

1. Can "no idling" signs be installed anywhere there will be truck staging at the site?

Yes, signs stating "no idling" will be installed at locations where truck staging will occur and Harvard's prohibitions against idling will be enforced.

2. Can more construction project boards be installed throughout the neighborhood?

Yes. We initially placed three construction information boards around the project site -- two on Western Avenue and one Rotterdam. We are in the process of adding a second board on Rotterdam Street, one at Charlesview, and one at or near the library.

3. Can the detail officers at the construction site be told to accommodate existing traffic in addition to construction vehicles? Can this be enforced regularly throughout the duration of the project?

We agree that the detail officers controlling traffic at the job site need to help control the vehicular traffic on the public streets and not just the construction related vehicles. The Harvard University Police Department is working directly with the Boston Police Department to provide management and oversight of the detail officers.

4. Where will Harvard locate the truck staging area?

The specific truck staging areas are dependent on the truck route that will be used. There are two main truck routes that are under review by Boston Transportation Department (BTD.) Once a final truck route is identified by BTD, we will present additional information on truck staging and queuing to the Task Force and the community.

5. Will Harvard set up a mitigation fund for close abutters like at the airport?

We do not anticipate implementing mitigation like the programs that were established at Logan Airport. The airport program was a specific, federally funded program to potentially mitigate the significant noise from airplanes, which exceeds City noise requirements.

6. How many trucks will be in active use at the site at one time?

Our construction consultant estimates that there will be a total of about 45 to 65 trucks at the construction site at one time- with approximately 15 to 20 trucks located within the site boundaries and approximately 30 to 45 trucks in the designated staging and queuing areas.

7. Where will the haul site be located?

The exact location of the haul site has not yet been identified, and it depends on several factors including the conditions of the soil. Right now we are doing a soil survey and continue to inventory and collect data on available dump sites. Our Environmental Health and Safety Department currently works with sites that range in travel distance from about 30 minutes away to others that are several hours away. Our standard practice is to leave it up to the contractor to select the location. It is also important to note that: 1) the site will change throughout the excavation process; and 2) the contracts will be written to require that trucks use the Massachusetts Turnpike to access whatever site is selected.

8. Where will the "early" truck staging area be located prior to the start of the construction work each morning?

The specific truck staging areas are dependent on the truck route that will be used. There are two main truck routes that are under review by BTD. Once a final truck route is identified by BTD, we will present additional information on truck staging and queuing to the Task Force and the community.

9. Will the project recycle construction materials?

Yes. We will reprocess and recycle construction waste. The disposal contract will include specification requirements that will ensure that construction procedures allow for the necessary segregation, reprocessing, reuse, and recycling of materials. Coordination of recycling existing building materials is being handled by the Institution Recycling Network. Existing doors, hardware, cabinets, ceiling tile and shelving are being recycled. Some of these materials will be recycled through the Building Materials Resource Center.

10. Will Rotterdam Street be closed during construction?

There will be occasions during the enabling phase when street closings are needed to install utilities and in the later phases for foundation work. The need for such closings will be coordinated with BTD. However, during the vast majority of the construction period, Rotterdam Street will remain a two-way road for both regular traffic and for construction truck traffic.

11. Has Harvard considered alternative locations for construction worker parking rather than the Sears site?

Yes. Based on initial discussions with construction consultants, it was recommended that we consolidate construction worker parking into a single site close to the construction site. In response, we proposed locating all of the parking on the site of the former Sears warehouse. After initial presentations to the community we have agreed to shift approximately 430 spaces to lots north of Western Avenue. This plan is subject to review and approval by BTD.

12. Will Harvard prioritize construction worker parking and fill up the Sears site parking spots last?

Yes. As has been described at Task Force meetings, during the early and later stages of construction we are proposing to use the parking spaces in the lot north of Western Avenue and only use the Sears site during peak periods. This plan is subject to review and approval by BTD.

13. Where will the wheel washing stations be located?

Wheel washing stations will be located at each exit from the construction site.

14. Will the sidewalks and streets be cleaned on a regular basis during construction?

Yes. It is proposed that there be daily street and sidewalk sweeping during most periods of construction and continuous street sweeping during the excavation periods.

15. What steps will Harvard take to manage rodent control?

Rodent inspection monitoring and treatment will be carried out before, during, and at the completion of all construction work for the proposed Project, in compliance with the City's requirements.

16. Will the construction trucks use bio-diesel fuel?

Diesel-powered equipment will be retrofitted to use ultra low sulfur fuel to improve air quality emissions in accordance with DEP initiatives. In addition, other equipment will be outfitted with oxidation catalysts to reduce the emissions.

17. How do we make sure Harvard can't replace retail uses in the future?

We are committed to creating active and interesting public spaces on the Western Avenue frontage of the project. The amount of retail space can be written into the Cooperation Agreement and as we have discussed at Task Force meetings, we will bring in our retail consultant to work with the BRA, the community, and the Task Force to discuss the types of retail spaces and tenants that are desirable.

18. Can retail users be local entrepreneurs and not franchisees?

As mentioned, the amount and type of retail space can be written into the Cooperation Agreement and as we have discussed at Task Force meetings, we will bring in our retail consultant to work with the BRA, the community, and the Task Force to discuss the types of retail spaces and tenants that are desirable.

19. What will be allowed to take place in the courtyard? Skateboarding? Public access?

The design intent of the exterior spaces around the Science Complex is for Library Park to be an active space, Academic Way to be a transitional space connecting the neighborhood with Western Avenue, and the courtyard within the Science Complex to be a more passive space. At this stage in the design process, it is premature to talk about

whether specific activities would be encouraged or allowed in the courtyard, however we anticipate that activities such as skateboarding will be discouraged within the courtyard space.

20. Can the name of the proposed "Rena Street Extension" be changed to something else?

The name Rena Street extension has been used as a placeholder in the design process. As the process for those new roadways continued, we will work with the City, the Task Force, and the community to develop a new name.

21. What will be Harvard's access to "Rena Street Extension"?

The Rena Street extension will provide access to the parking garage and the loading dock for the Science Complex, and will also include on-street parking spaces.

22. What is the street plan beyond the science complex?

The preliminary ideas have been presented in the IMPNF filing for the master plan (dated January 11, 2007). As we re-engage on the master plan with the BRA, other city agencies, the Task Force, and the community, we will continue the discussions of the existing and proposed street network.

23. The proposed bicycle routes for the science complex seem incomplete. Will a better bicycle network be incorporated into Harvard's plans?

The bicycle planning information presented in the DPIR relates mostly to the Science Complex site and its immediate surroundings. The master plan process will continue the larger discussion of more regional bike planning.

24. Can Harvard look into the data and analysis on pedestrian accidents that might result from the impacts of the project?

Pedestrian and bicycle accident data were not requested by the BRA and BTD as part of the Scoping Determination. However, as requested by the Task Force, we are currently researching what data is available on pedestrian accidents.

25. Can temporary or "interim-uses" be defined more specifically?

For the purposes of the DPIR (specifically the public realm improvements), *temporary* is intended to describe mitigation to be implemented during the construction period, and *interim* is intended to be short to mid-term improvements in locations where final improvements are not possible because of site restrictions.

26. When will the North Harvard Street improvements that were in Harvard's 1997 Institutional Master Plan be completed?

We are currently in discussions with the City as to the specific design, engineering, and permitting requirements of those improvements and expect to have them underway in the summer.

27. Can the chain linked fence along Harvard's athletic fields on North Harvard Street be replaced with more permeable and open fences?

The chain link fence will be replaced with a similar new fence. The fences serve a safety purpose – they are designed to keep soccer balls and other athletic activities from spilling into traffic on North Harvard Street.

28. What is the size of the building?

As is typical in the permitting process, the Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) described the size of the Science Complex in accordance with the definition of gross square footage in the Boston Zoning Code. As described in the DPIR, the Science Complex will be approximately 537,000 gross square feet of above-ground space within four building components and an additional 52,000 gross square feet of below-grade space.

29. What is the FAR (floor area ratio)?

The Project, as currently designed, has an FAR of 1.6. A specific FAR depends on the definition of the project area around it. This calculation assumes that the proposed Academic Way, Rena Street extension, and Stadium Way are included in the definition of the site.

30. How will construction worker parking be enforced and regulated? Will there be a full-time traffic enforcer?

Workers will be provided with a parking pass when they are badged and screened. The construction mitigation team will be walking the neighborhood and will be responding to any reports of worker parking in the neighborhood.

31. Why is Harvard using a 50% mode share when its existing buildings in Allston use a 72% mode share?

As shown in the Science Complex DPIR, automobile mode shares range from 40 percent among Harvard employees in Cambridge to 72 percent among a small sample of Harvard faculty and staff in Allston. (Automobile mode share is the percentage of building occupants expected to arrive by car versus another form of transportation such as shuttle, MBTA, walking, bicycle, etc.) The Science Center population is not a direct match to the surveyed faculty and staff population in Allston. When the current Allston mode split data is adjusted to include graduate students, which is a population similar in many ways to the expected research staff at the Science Complex, the mode split for Allston is in the range anticipated for the Science Complex (45 – 50 percent). As noted, the Science Complex will be linked to Harvard Square by a shuttle system, which is likely to result in

a future transit mode share for Science Complex employees to be similar to that of the existing Harvard employees in Cambridge.

32. The DPIR says Harvard's "long-term" target is a 50% mode-share, what is Harvard's "short-term" target? What does "long range" mean when the 50% mode share is described as a "long range target"?

The short term target for the mode share is 50% but for the DPIR transportation analysis, as requested by BTD, a mode share of 59% was used.

As described in the IMPNF for Harvard's Allston Campus, a target automobile mode share of 50 percent is applicable for all projects that are to be part of the Phase 1 IMP. Therefore, "long range" refers to the first phase of the Master Plan.

33. Will there be a dedicated construction liaison on-site at all times?

The construction liaison will be on-site during hours when work is being conducted. During hours when work is not being conducted, people will be able to use the 24-hour construction mitigation hotline.