

Nadia Khan

From: Thomas Kraus
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2016 2:35 PM
To: Nadia Khan
Cc: DEBORAH CROSSLEY
Subject: (Please distribute to City Council) - Clarification on position of Newtonville Area Council on Bridge Improvements re: Washington Place

On December 5, during the council-members' discussion portion of the hearing, some statements were made by several Councilors that the Newtonville Area Council did not support improvements to the bridge. I do not feel that this accurately reflects the position of the NAC.

When the possibility of substantial improvements to the bridge were first proposed, I spoke publicly in favor of such efforts to try and reunify the village. We (several members of the NAC) spoke at length with the petitioner to understand what was being proposed, and what the costs estimates were. In that meeting, we learned that the petitioner had learned from MASS DOT that the bridge is currently at-capacity in terms of static load, and that the proposed changes would add too much weight without otherwise reducing weight. In order to implement the proposed changes, much of the existing concrete would need to be removed and replaced with a lower density concrete, and that the total costs would be in the range of the \$1,000,000 that the petitioner is offering for extended public benefits.

The petitioner found that there was little enthusiasm for the extensive modifications from either the public or from the City Council, so he pulled back on this idea. The NAC does support the idea of including aesthetic improvements to the bridge; however, given the amount of reconstruction necessary to implement the original concept, we do question whether putting all of this money into the bridge provides the maximal benefit to the community from the \$1,000,000 being offered. At a minimum, we feel that the bridge should incorporate period lighting fixtures that match the lighting fixtures that we hope will become the standard design for the Newtonville Village. We support further exploration of what might be done within the load limits of the existing structure that might lessen the hostile pedestrian experience of crossing the Turnpike that exists with the current state of the bridge.

Thank you,

Thomas Kraus,
Newtonville Area Council