

Mr. John Dalton
MBTA/GLX General Manager
GLX Program Manager

Cc: Mayor Joseph Curtatone, City of Somerville
Mr. Brad Rawson, Director of Transportation & Infrastructure, OSPCD, City of Somerville
Ms. Lydia Rivera, GLX Project Team, Public Outreach
Mr. Randy Henke, GLX Project Team

July 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Dalton,

On behalf of the 220 occupants of the Brickbottom Artists Buildings and the arts community of Somerville, we respectfully request a change to the specifications for the noise wall composition on either side of the Brickbottom Artists Buildings.

Four GLX noise walls, two upper and two lower, will surround the Brickbottom complex on the North and South sides.

On the South side, your team tells us¹ that the approximately 600' length of the upper level noise wall will be composed of 8' of concrete topped with 4' of acrylic and that the acrylic will satisfy EPA noise mitigation requirements. While we appreciate this, it will leave the south-facing first floor of the building in full shadow, all day, for three solid months of winter².

In contrast, by modifying a 150' section of the noise wall to be 4' of concrete topped with 8' of acrylic, the first floor will have partial shadow for only one month of winter. This is the difference between light and no light for a quarter of the year to the artists who have established Somerville as the leading Arts City in New England. The remaining 450' would not need to be changed from the 8:4 concrete to acrylic composition so the increase in cost is minor.

On the North side, we request that the noise wall finish be specified as light reflecting, i.e., material that is light in color or light mirroring. This will make an enormous difference to all of the north-facing units and our inner courtyard by allowing light to bounce back and off the angled wall of our complex. This should make no difference in cost.

Although Brickbottom occupies the most adversely impacted site along the GLX corridor, the Brickbottom community remains among your most ardent supporters. We appreciate the difficulties you face in minimizing cost while maximizing public good. We offer this solution as a clear winner on both sides.

Respectfully yours,

Maryann Heuston, Ward 2 Alderman, City of Somerville

The Brickbottom Artists Building Board of Trustees

Bonnie Borthwick

Duncan Browne

William Gilligan

Robert Kassel

William Kipp

Randal Thurston

Lucas Toffoli

¹ Communicated June 29, 2017, GLX/Brickbottom meeting, Brickbottom Artists Building.

² The MBTA's consultant, Jonathan West, created a shadow study for the former GLX team. Working with a 3D modeler at Brickbottom in 2014-2015, he discovered errors in his model. The MBTA intended to correct their model accordingly. If this has not been done, Brickbottom has the corrected model for anyone to view or use.