

Madalyn Letellier

From: Matthew Kalish [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 2:12 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: GSNC Board; Transportation; Matthew McLaughlin; [REDACTED];
Matthew Goldstein; [REDACTED]; Jesse
Clingan; Public Comments; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re:
Attachments: McGrath Project_GSNC Feedback_02.22.26.docx
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Good afternoon McGrath Project team,

I wanted to follow up on my message below to receive your receipt confirmation of the attached letter.

I am also adding a few additional individuals to the thread for awareness.

Thank you,

Matthew Kalish
GSNC Board Member
Somerville Resident, Ward 4

Matthew Goldstein
GSNC Board Member
Somerville Resident, Ward 4

On Sun, Feb 22, 2026 at 3:07 PM Matthew Kalish [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear McGrath Project Team (and associated City of Somerville staff and representatives)

Thank you for your presentation of the most recent McGrath Project design and the opportunity to provide input as design progresses towards its final stages. We are writing on behalf of the Gilman Square Neighborhood Council (GSNC), which borders McGrath Highway between the McCarthy Overpass and Broadway.

GSNC has been soliciting community feedback and prepared a brief letter expressing a few concerns and recommendations on the design to best fit the community's needs. We hope that you can please review the attached letter and consider the community's input as you progress towards the next design submittal. The GSNC's Board would be more than happy to set up a brief conversation to review the items in further detail and answer any questions or concerns that the project team has.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to continued collaboration as you work towards final design and shovels in the ground.

Sincerely,

Matthew Kalish
GSNC Board Member
Somerville Resident, Ward 4

Matthew Goldstein
GSNC Board Member
Somerville Resident, Ward 4

Dear McGrath Project Team,

The Gilman Square Neighborhood Council (GSNC) is writing to you in response to the 25%/ conceptual design presentation of the McGrath Boulevard Project. First and foremost, we are thrilled that this project continues to move forward and are eager to see it progress expeditiously towards final design and shovels in the ground. While design is ongoing, the GSNC has a few major concerns we would like to present to the city for discussion with the design consultant team and Massachusetts DOT.

Virginia Street and Aldrich Street intersection:

The GSNC is concerned about the plan to close off Aldrich Street from McGrath Highway, as this forces all traffic to Gilman Street to cut through local residential streets (Jasper, Virginia, and Aldrich). All cars driving to Gilman Street south of Aldrich must go on Pearl Street to Jasper, Virginia, and Aldrich to reach the residential addresses on Gilman Southbound. This creates bike/ped conflicts with additional cars turning from McGrath on to Pearl St, and additional unnecessary left turns across the new Pearl Street protected bike lanes on to Jasper St.

GSNC's recommendation is to dead-end Virginia St and leave Aldrich St open to traffic from McGrath, implementing pedestrian and bicycle safety measures such as speed bumps and chicanes to ensure traffic from McGrath is traveling at slow and safe speeds along Aldrich. This will ensure cars traveling southbound from McGrath do not need to turn right on Pearl St, left on Jasper, and left on Virginia to ultimately reach Aldrich and Gilman streets.

Below is the section of Virginia GSNC proposes to de-pave and create a public space, effectively creating a dead-end at Virginia where it meets McGrath:



The GSNC believes that further community and municipality discussion must take place on this stretch of roadway, however please note that we are strongly against the current proposal as it will increase automobile traffic on local residential streets that is not necessary.

Otis Street crossing:

In the March 2025 conceptual design presentation, the Otis Street crossing was designed to demolish the existing pedestrian bridge and replace it with a new fully signalized bike/ped crossing. The GSNC strongly supports this design, as it prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle safety while staying true to the “Boulevard” nature of the street. In the latest conceptual design presented in December, the fully signalized crossing is now presented as a RRFB or PHB pedestrian crossing. The slide notes that the fully signalized crossing is not legal due to state and federal vehicle volume warrants for a state highway, however we would like to see the specific ruling for why this is not legal. In addition, this McGrath Boulevard should no longer be considered a “state highway”. The overarching purpose of this project is to improve safety, and we believe that installing a beacon rather than a fully signalized crossing prioritizes car speeds over pedestrian safety. A pedestrian count taken in December 2025 counted 51 pedestrians, including 39 schoolchildren, crossing over McGrath at Otis Street in just 28 minutes on a weekday morning.

The GSNC recommends reinstating full signalization at the Otis St. crossing to prioritize the safety of the community members, and specifically the children utilizing this crossing.

McGrath Boulevard Bus Stop – Pearl Street

MBTA has confirmed that following McGrath Boulevard construction completion, Route 85 will extend along McGrath and stop at McGrath/Pearl St. Presently there is no bus stop included in the design and **GSNC recommends that bus stops be included** in the final design, in coordination with MBTA's Better Bus Plan.

We look forward to further discussion on this in a timely manner so that the design team can implement the changes as it progresses towards 75% design submission.

Thank you,

GSNC Board