
City of Cambridge Community Development Department Transit Advisory Committee

November 2024





Welcome

Purpose

Get feedback from appointed members of the TAC, the City's "community experts"

Outcomes

City staff to hear feedback on outreach for projects in Alewife area and TAC members to know what plans are for the area

Process

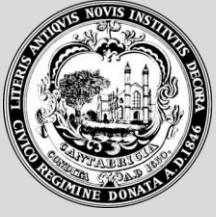
TAC to 'raise hand' during presentations and discussions

Public to type in questions in zoom Q&A or speak verbal comments during public comment period



Presentation: Alewife area planning

Melissa Peters, Andy Reker
Community Development



**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Alewife District Planning

**Transit Advisory Committee
November 7, 2024**



Purpose, Outcomes, Process

Purpose

- TAC requested a presentation from City staff on the planning for Alewife area – primarily on topics related to public transit, access to transit, development and infrastructure

Outcomes

- City staff know TAC member questions and TAC advice on community engagement/outreach
- Advisory Committee members to know what projects are going on and how they relate to each other and transportation planning goals

Process

- Slide presentation with brief summary for current projects or initiatives
- Discussion with advisory committee members, public to participate in Zoom Q+A or at end with public comment period



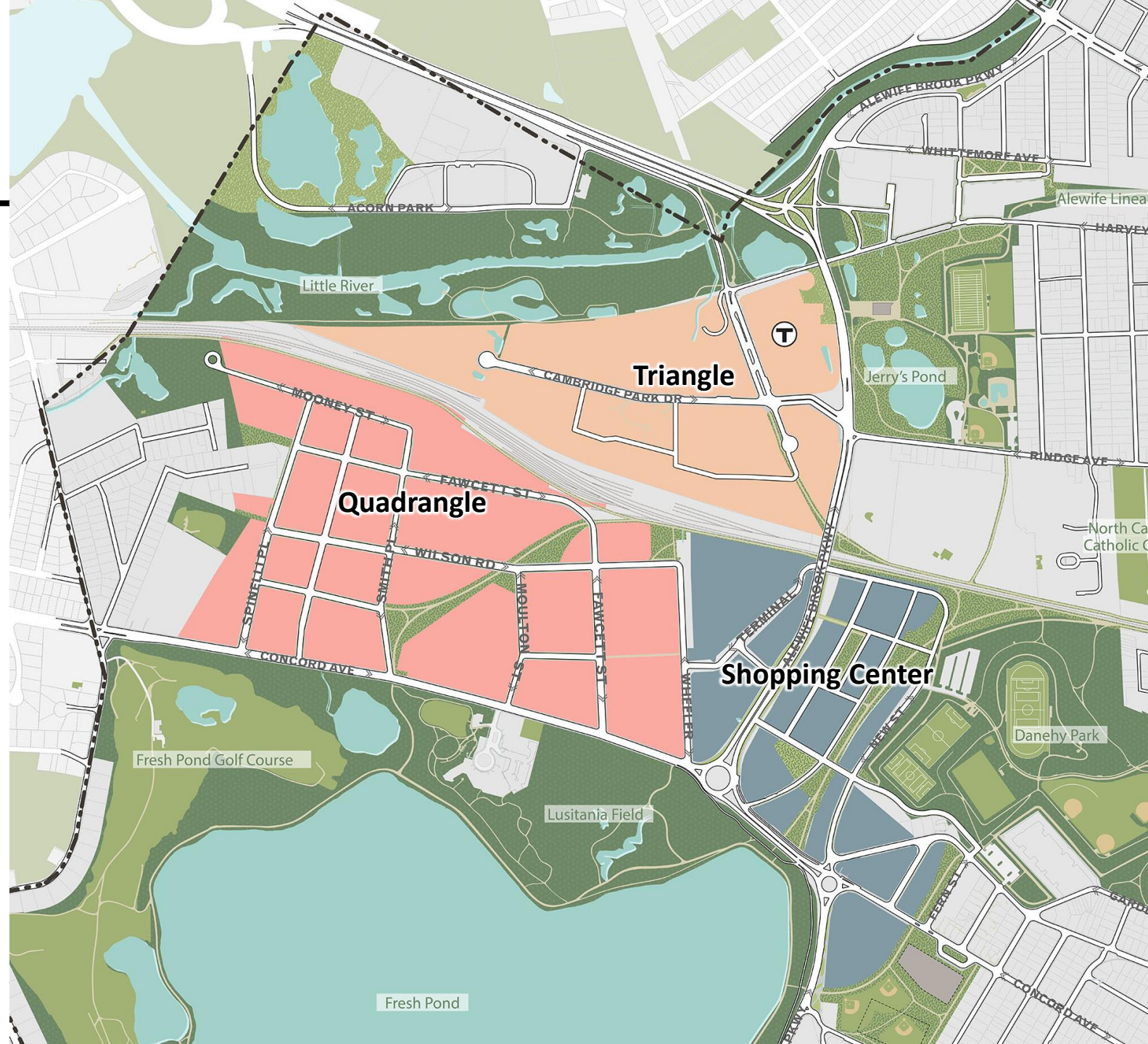
Topics in this presentation

- Overview and recap
- Quadrangle area
 - Recent zoning changes
- Triangle/Whittemore Avenue area
 - MBTA Alewife Red Line Station, Hi-Rail Access, MassDOT bridge replacement
 - IQHQ Development
- Fitchburg Line area
 - Alewife Commuter Rail Demand Study
 - Fitchburg Crossing



Alewife

- Growth area for City
- Experiencing significant investment and redevelopment
- Alewife District Plan completed in 2019
- New zoning adopted for Quadrangle subdistrict in 2023



Sampling of Recent/Ongoing Development

36-64 Whittemore Ave



35 Cambridgepark Dr



50 Cambridgepark Dr



87-101 Cambridgepark Dr



- 5 buildings / 735,500 square feet
- Predominantly technical office/lab uses, with some retail use
- Includes improvements to Jerry's Pond and MBTA headhouse
- Incorporates community gardens and on-site Ecological Center and tree nursery

- 5-story / 185,000 square feet
- Technical office/lab uses and ground-floor retail
- Replacement of asphalt parking area with multiple rain gardens, bioswale, shade tree clusters and outdoor seating areas.

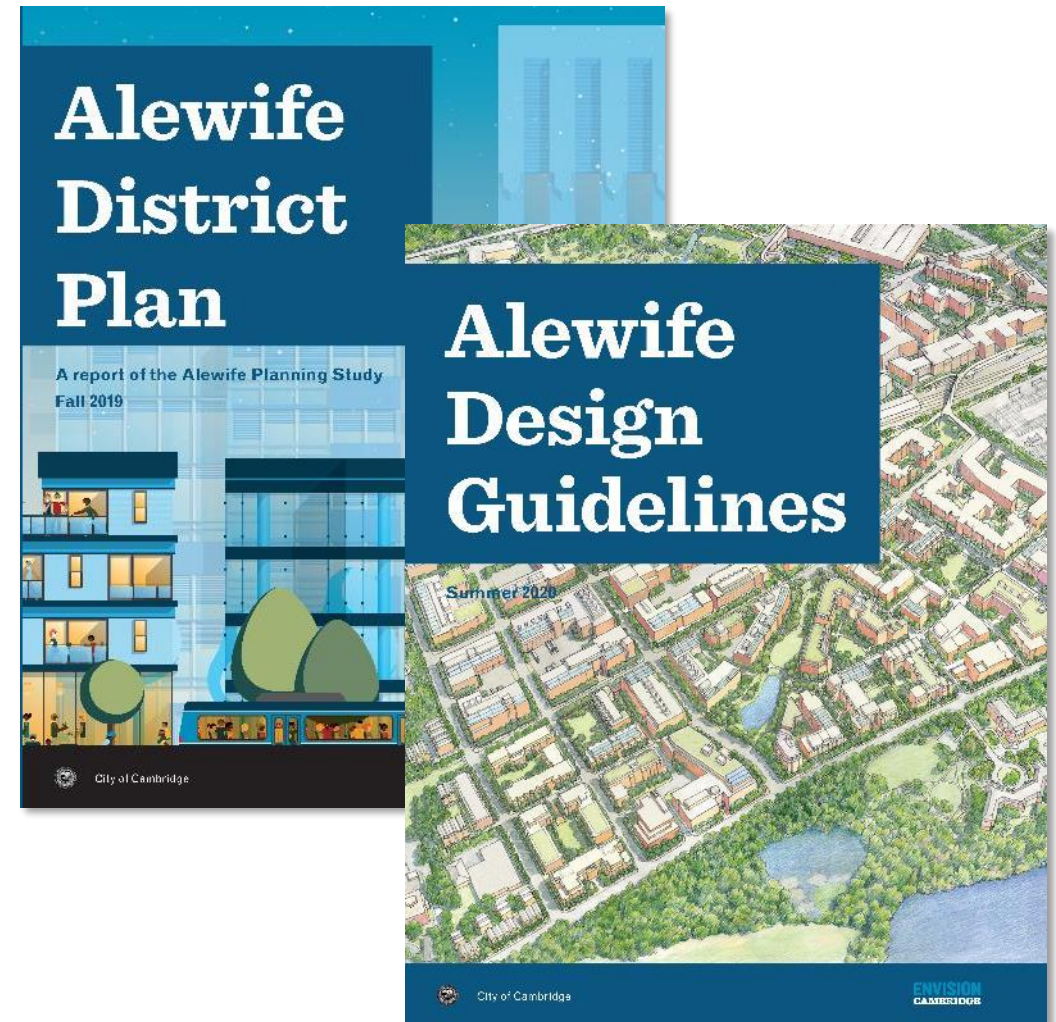
- 8-story / 321,683 square feet
- Multifamily residential and ground-floor retail & consumer service uses
- New raised cycle track on Cambridgepark Drive and ped/bike improvements on north-south drive

- 5-story / 142,000 square feet
- Technical office/lab uses and ground-floor retail & consumer service uses
- New multi-use path connecting Cambridgepark Drive to Fitchburg path to the north



Alewife District Plan Goals

- Build a cohesive mixed-use district
- Balance economic growth with housing development districtwide
- Promote sustainable transportation and reduce growth in vehicular traffic
- Create a resilient, pedestrian-friendly public realm
- Create a continuous open space & recreation network



Alewife Quadrangle

Quadrangle Rezoning process

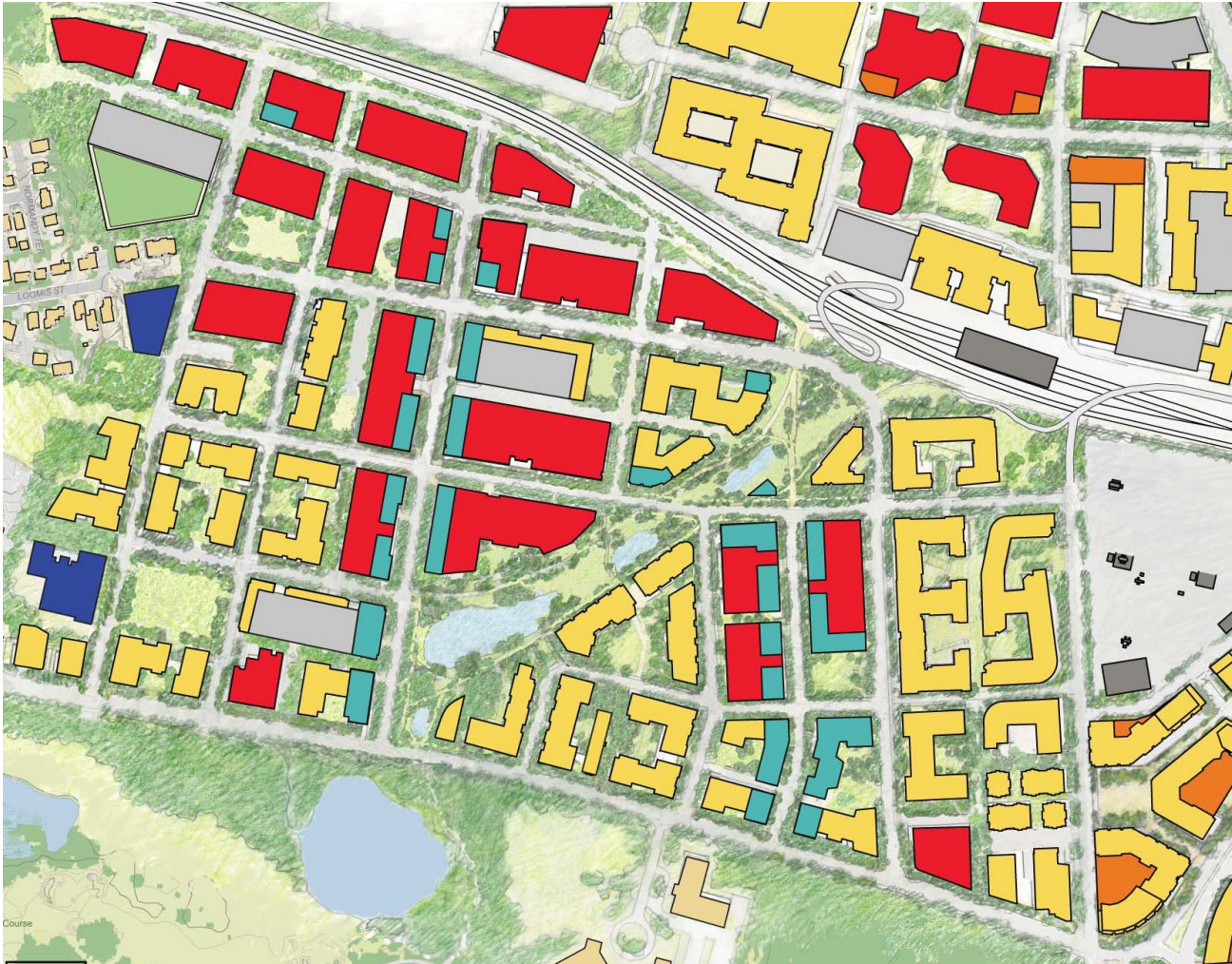
- Significant acquisition and land assembly by Healthpeak
- Alewife Zoning Working Group established to draft zoning for the district (2022)
- Working Group consisted of residents, property owners, business owners, institutions, and nonprofits
- New zoning adopted for Quadrangle by City Council Vote 9-0 (2023)
- Rezoning process for Triangle and Shopping Center subdistricts to start in 2025



Alewife Quad Planning Objectives

- Create a mixed-use district to balance economic growth with housing development
- Increase housing supply, including affordable housing
- Promote a variety of ground floor uses, including but not limited to light industrial
- Prioritize earlier delivery of infrastructure
- Allow tallest commercial heights near track
- Scale down to existing neighborhood

Alewife Quad Vision Benefits



2040 Buildout in Quad only	
- New Housing Units	~3,000 units
- New Affordable Housing Units (Inclusionary)	~600 units
- New Residents	~6,000 residents
- Net New Jobs	~4,700 jobs

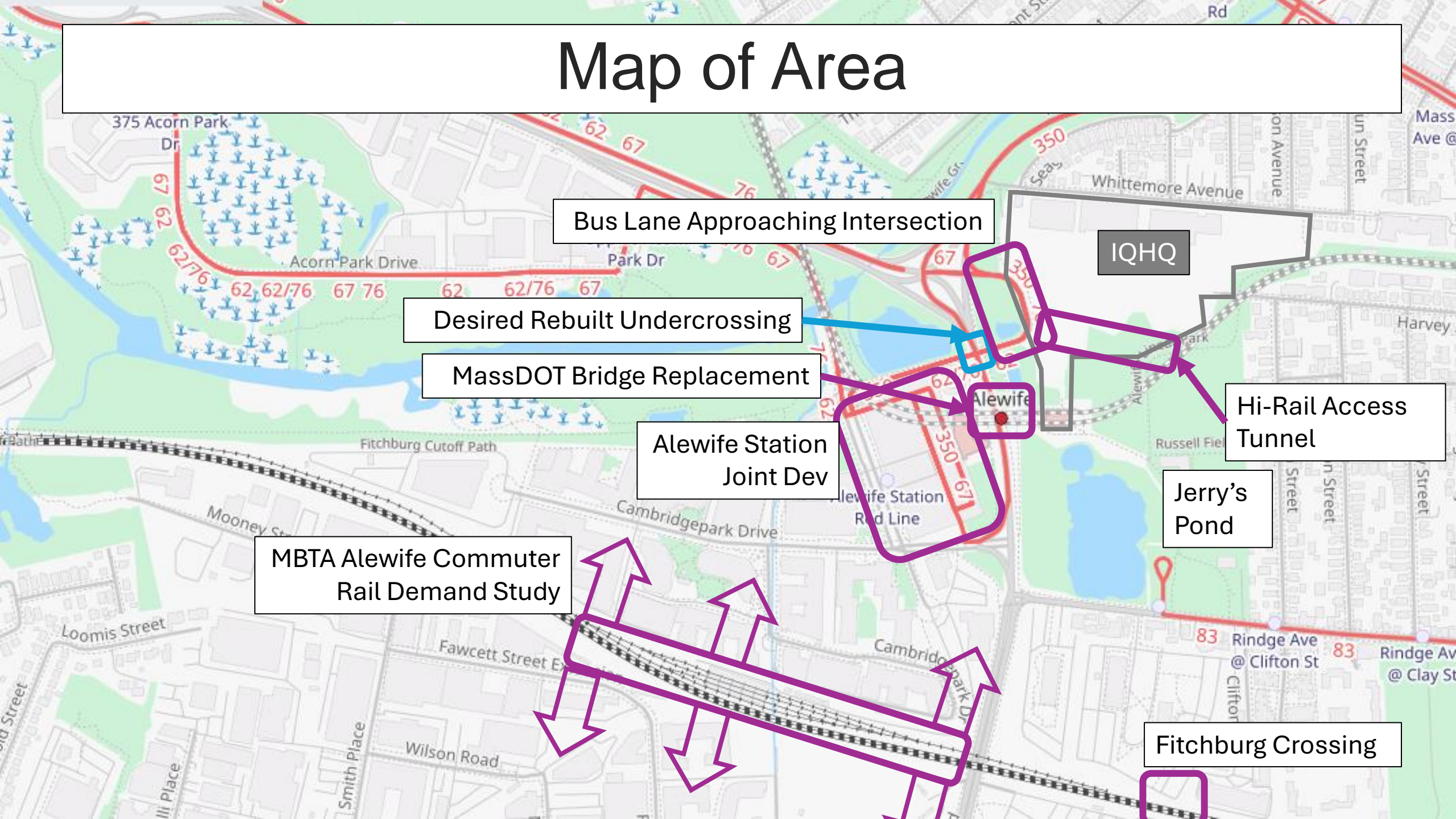
Proposed Land Use

- Residential
- Neighborhood Uses
- Commercial
- Parking
- Retail
- Civic

Alewife Triangle and Whittemore Ave



Map of Area



Bus Lane Approaching Intersection

Desired Rebuilt Undercrossing

MassDOT Bridge Replacement

Alewife Station
Joint Dev

MBTA Alewife Commuter
Rail Demand Study

IQHQ

Hi-Rail Access
Tunnel

Jerry's
Pond

Fitchburg Crossing

Alewife Triangle + Whittemore

Jughandle Bus Lane

IQHQ

Hi-Rail Access

Alewife Station
Joint Dev

MassDOT Bridge

Source: Nearmap, Here | October 19, 2024

MBTA Alewife Station

Alewife complex today is composed of the station, garage, and approx. 30 acres of land, operations areas, and support facilities



The Garage

A five-story, 1 million sq. ft. structure with 2,733 parking spaces



The Station

The northern terminus of the MBTA Red Line and is serviced by four bus routes. Serves 5,000 daily transit boardings projected to increase to 7,500 by 2028.



The Real Estate

MBTA-owned real property and MBTA property rights in land owned by third parties proximate to the station and garage.



MBTA Infrastructure Modernization Goals

Transit Station

- Improve the customer experience
- Upgrade station for safety and accessibility
- Consider future service needs

Parking

- New parking facility, sized for demand
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Secure bicycle parking

Busway

- Bus Network Redesign – Bus Routes 62, 67, 76, 350
- Battery Electric Bus infrastructure
- Private shuttle accommodations

Multimodal Connections

- Accessible pedestrian connections
- Last-mile connections, ride share
- Secure bicycle facilities & connections



Joint Development Partner Process

1 Solicitation

- Issue Request for Proposal (RFP) for Joint Development partner
- Create shortlist of respondents
- Interviews with shortlisted respondents
- Joint Development partner selected

2 Pre-development Services

- Successful development partner will enter into a Pre-Development Services Agreement with the MBTA
- Project team works cooperatively with the MBTA to conduct due diligence, design, permitting and stakeholder outreach

3 Lease Negotiation

- At the completion of pre-development services and after final MEPA/NEPA determination, the MBTA and the selected developer partner will negotiate a Lease for the design, construction, operations, and/or maintenance of, and long-term lease of, the Assets.

4 Lease & Initiation

- If negotiations are successful, the development partner and the MBTA will enter into a long-term Lease.
- If negotiations are not successful, partnership dissolution process, per PDA, is conducted.



Joint Development and TOD Planning Project Lifecycle



MassDOT Bridge Replacement



Project goal

Improve safety and capacity of the bridge over the Red Line station plaza

Outcomes

Replace parts of bridge to extend life of crossing by 75+ years
Potential addition of lighting under bridge to improve night time use of paths

Process

Accelerated bridge construction technique to replace bridge
Weekend closures and weeknight work with some closure

Expect construction to start as soon as Fall-Winter 2025



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IQHQ Development Commitments

City Planning Board Review ([PB-387](#)) - 2022

Infrastructure Improvements

- Study feasibility and, if feasible, design and construct a **dedicated bus lane** on (east) Alewife Access Road, east of undercrossing
- Study feasibility of widening undercrossing
- Design and construct, if requested, traffic signal at Steel Place/Alewife Station Access Road
- Fund a Bluebikes station onsite

Access Paths

- Upgrade walking path from project to Russell Field headhouse at Alewife Station
- Rebuild Russell Field headhouse station plaza



IQHQ Neighborhood Commitments

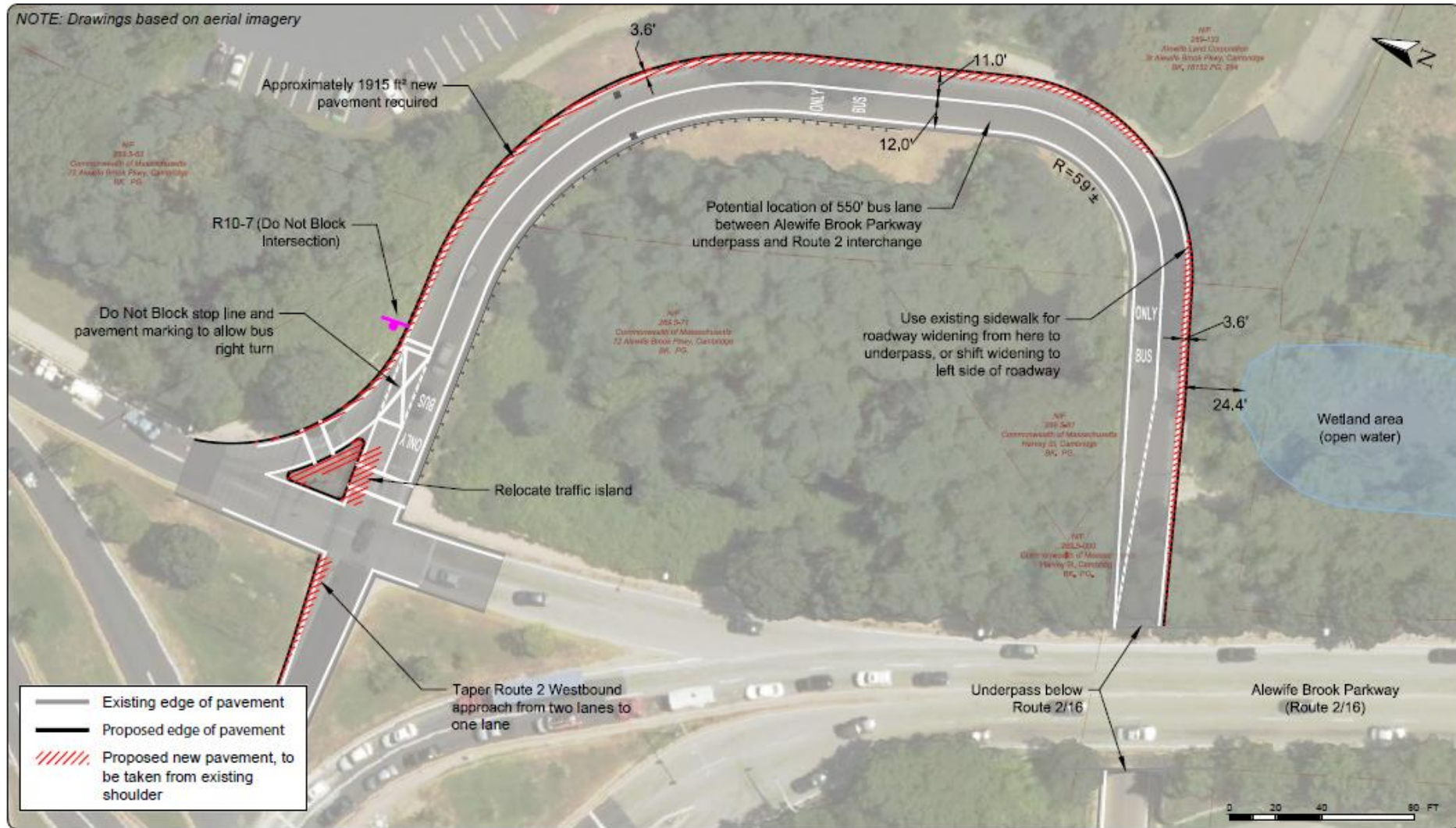
City Planning Board Review ([PB-387](#)) - 2022

Jerry's Pond and Russell Field area, including private commitments with neighbors

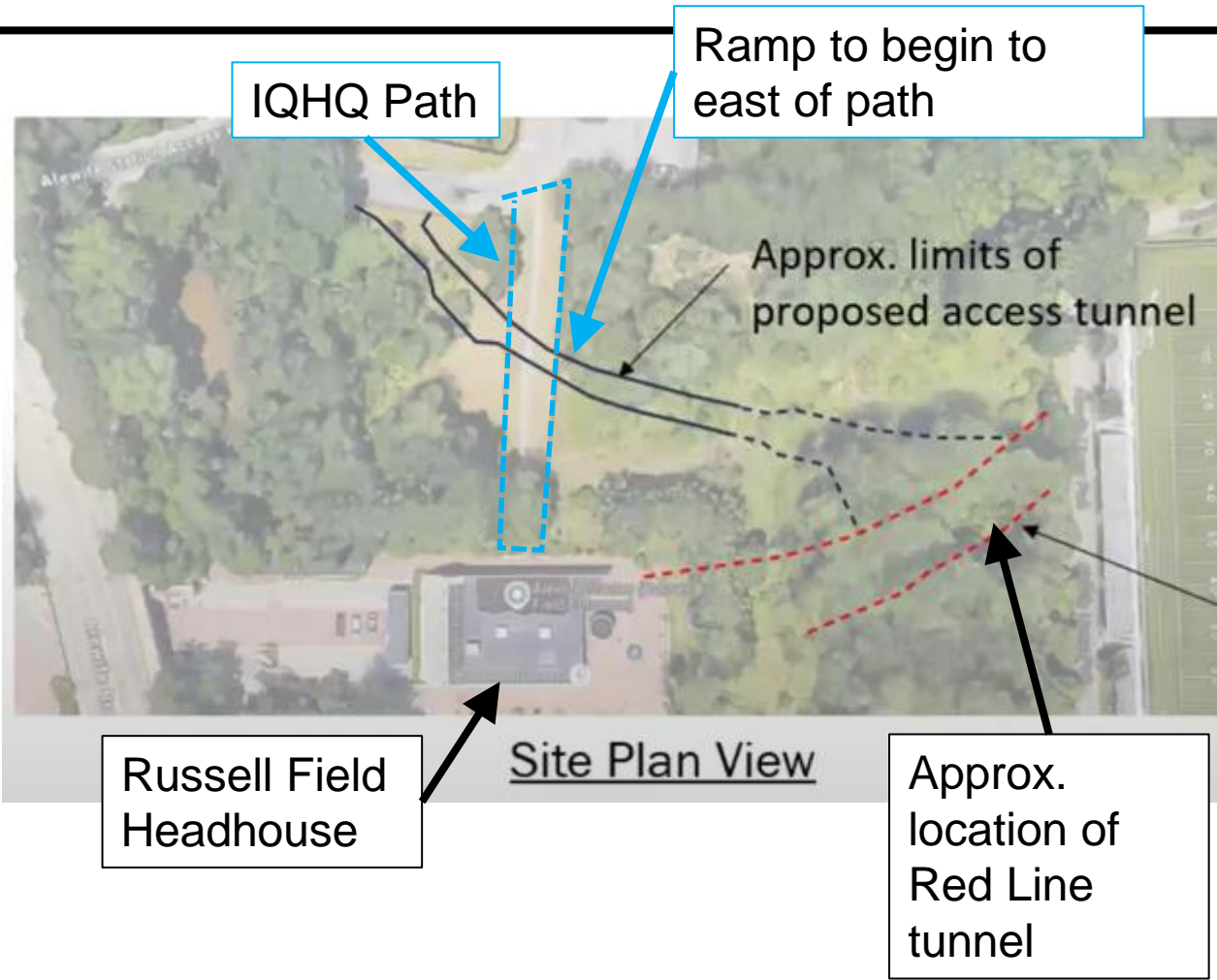
- Rebuild driveway entrance from Rindge Ave to parking area
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements on Rindge Avenue
- Walkway and pathways around Jerry's Pond, including:
 - Seating areas
 - Overlooks
 - Boardwalks
 - Gardens



CTPS “Jughandle” Concept Sketch (2017)



MBTA Red Line Hi-Rail Access Tunnel



Project goal

Provide a new access point to the Red Line in Cambridge

Outcomes

Reduce duration and extent of Red Line closures for regular maintenance
Improves ability for MBTA to maintain a state of good repair

Process

Design approaching 75% with additional work expected in 2025

Expect construction from Summer 2026 to Spring 2028



Fitchburg Line Area

Commuter Rail
Station Feasibility

Fitchburg Crossing

Danehy / New St Path

Source: Nearmap, Here | April 10, 2024

Nearmap

LEGEND

● ● ● Approximate East-West Multi-Use Path Location
(North side of Fitchburg Line)

⊙ Approximate Pedestrian-Bike Bridge Crossing Location

↔ Possible Connections to Multi-Use Path

▄▄▄▄ Possible Connection to Sherman Street
(South side of Fitchburg Line)

— — — — — Danehy-New Street Connector Path (In Design)

— — — — — Existing Multi-Use Path Network



Fitchburg Crossing

Status

- Working on signing federal grant agreements for \$2.4m design funds
- A Request for Qualifications is out for review now with proposals from design teams due Nov. 14th.

Next Steps

- Complete the designer proposal selection and contract
- Look to begin project kick-off and public engagement in early 2025

Alewife Commuter Rail Demand

Study originates in 2022 Economic Development/American Rescue Plan Act Bond Bill (Massachusetts House Bill 537)

Outcomes

- Estimate potential ridership based on expected development, current travel patterns
- No engineering/conceptual design for station or station access
- MBTA will consider station on ridership estimates, impacts to travel times

Assumptions

- No significant changes to current Fitchburg Line schedules (i.e. same number of daily trips)
- Include changes from development based on recent zoning changes and district general plan

Work is being given to technical consultants

Expect a 6-9 month study duration

City to check-in on progress regularly with project team

Questions

What do you think Cambridge residents, workers, students want to hear about?

What formats may work for community engagement/outreach?

Some options could be:

- Project-based meetings and outreach
- Neighborhood based meetings and outreach

Thank you for participating in this Transit
Advisory Committee meeting.

Stay healthy and well!

Thank You