

# Mount Auburn Street



## A Complete Streets Project

### Coolidge Square Open House: Summary

Tuesday, January 30: 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM

The Apartments at Coolidge School - Auditorium

319 Arlington Street, Watertown

#### Present

##### State Elected Officials

State Representative Jon Hecht

State Senator William Brownsberger

##### Town of Watertown Attendees

Superintendent Gerald Mee, Matthew Shuman and Dennis Sheehan, Department of Public Works (DPW)  
Gideon Schreiber, Steve Magoon and Laura Wiener, Community Development & Planning

##### Town Councilors

Council President Mark Sideris

Councilor Caroline Bays

Councilor Angeline Kounelis

Councilor Tony Palomba

Councilor Vincent Piccirilli

Councilor Ken Woodland

##### Project Team Attendees

Rich Benevento, Bill Mertz, John Dixson, Michael Pompili, Adam Prichard and Kristopher Surette, WorldTech Engineering (WTE)

Nancy Farrell, Sarah Paritsky and Samantha Souto, Regina Villa Associates (RVA)

##### Public Attendees

A list of public attendees can be found below.

#### Materials (available on project website)

- [Informational Boards](#)
  - Sign in/registration
    - Live/Work Map of Watertown
  - Planning
    - Built Environment
    - Vision for the Future

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

- Traffic/Safety
    - Complete Streets Concept
    - Road Safety Audit: Recommendations for Further Study
    - Traffic Data – Level of Service
  - Complete Streets and Bicycle/Pedestrian Issues
    - Bicycle Accommodations
    - Pedestrian Accommodations
    - Crosswalk Locations
  - Parking/Loading
    - Parking Inventory
    - Parking, Loading, & Wayfinding
  - Transit Operations
    - Bus Accommodations
    - Bus Stops & Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
  - Coolidge Square Concepts/Maps
    - Aerial maps of Coolidge Square neighborhood with Conceptual Design
  - Remainder of Mt. Auburn Street Corridor
    - Mt. Auburn Street Corridor (1)
    - Mt. Auburn Street Corridor (2)
- [Handout/Comment Form](#)
  - [Road Diet Fact Sheet](#)

### Format

The meeting was arranged in an open house format with informational boards set up at stations around the room. Project team and Town staff were available to speak one-on-one with members of the public and answer their questions.



Attendees received a handout/comment form that guided them through the different stations and asked specific questions at each, allowing them to write their responses on the form. Transcriptions of the comment forms are available in Appendix A.

After signing in, participants were invited to place a pin on a map of Watertown indicating where they live (green) and work (red). Results of this exercise are below.

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary



At the Coolidge Square Conceptual Map station, attendees had the opportunity to draw or write comments directly on the maps or on sticky notes (see photo, below). Transcriptions of the notes on the map are categorized in Appendix B.



### Public Attendees

John Airasian  
Pete Airasian  
Jason Alves  
Anni Asnes  
June Baboian  
Jill Baker  
Mary Barry  
Lucine Barsanian

Herout Bassmejian  
Paul Bedrosian, Pedrosian Funeral Home  
Terence Belli  
Terri Bogage  
Charlie Breitrose, Watertown News  
Adam Brewster  
Jeffrey Brown, Watertown Planning Board  
Bob Carey

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

Sharon Cassidey	Melissa Morse
Jim Caulfield	Michael Motano
Nancy Chenausky	Jamie Murphy
David Churchill	Brice Norton
Michelle Cokonougher	Bill Oates
Matt Colella	Marion Oates
Rita Colella	Sharon O'Neill
Andre Compagna, Watertown Bike	Albert Ordoubeigian
Fr. Dajad Davidian	Missak Ourfalian, Massis Bakery
Barbara Demore	Liz Padula, Artemis Yoga
Edward Demore	Mark Palmer
Mimi deQuesada, New Rep Theater	Germaine Palmer
Emidio DeVirgilio, Tufts Health Plan	Henry Parseki
Jackie Dobson	Deborah Peterson
Dennis J. Duff	Mark Peterson
Sarah Eckstein	Victor Preston
Sally Eyring	David Quilter
Shep Ferguson	Allyson Reed
David Ferris	Indra Reinberys
Marian Ferro	Jill Reurs
Susan Flint, WAA & MFH	Shannon Rice
John J. Foley	Penny Roscoe
Ed Forrester	Kevin Ross
Ed Frankenberry	Arun Sannuti
Jesse Hammond, Watertown Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (WBPC)	Sam Scoppettone, WBPC
Shaunna Harrington	Libby Shaw
Brian Hebeisen	Missy Shay
Roger Herzog	Bob Shay
John Hostage	Andrew Smith, MBTA
Janet Jameson	Victoria Spa
Cornelia Janke	David Spiller
Kirk Kaloustian	Anni Spitzer
Mary Keenan	Stephen Steadman, Church of the Good Shepherd
Rosalyn Komins	Todd Stewart
Jonathan Kresch	David Stokes
Bob Laurcella	Doug Storms
Joe Levendusky	Kathie Tam
Don Levy, Deluxe Town Diner	Emily Thibodean
Julia Li	Penny Timperio
Lee Longman	Ron Timperio
George MacMasters	Heather Tuttle
Kalyn Madden	David Van
Janet McBride	Geraldine Vatan, DOT
Jonathan McCurry	Miranda Volpicelli
Michael Montaro	Michael Volpicelli
	Abby Yanow

## Appendix A: Comment Form Transcriptions

A total of 37 comment forms were submitted during the meeting or following the event via email. The answers submitted in response to each question are listed below.

### What makes Coolidge Square a special place?

Atmosphere, stores/places to eat, new crosswalk lights = fantastic!
Restaurants/ local specialty shops/ hardware store
The diversity in terms of business & ethnicity
Cute, close to Harvard
Business activity
Good mix of business, grocery stores, hardware & restaurants
Nothing - it's a mess
Unique shopping restaurants
The local shops are all close by, convenient within walking distance
Feels like village - someplace you might want to spend time in
Coolidge Hardware, Town Diner
It has potential
Wonderful food! Small scale businesses give it an authentic, neighborhood feel
All the stores, certain unique availabilities
So many shops and restaurants, the park is nice as well.
Variety of shops
It has a number of amenities within walking distance to my home and has a neighborhood center feel.
Diversity of businesses, proximity to residential areas and parks/playgrounds
Quality & variety of local businesses
Local special businesses - eg: Coolidge Hardware, Deluxe Town Diner, Massis Bakery, Uncommon Grounds, other restaurants and stores (Not Dunkin Donuts!)
a concentration of diverse individually owned small businesses, a sense of authentic character, walkable, affordable
The shops, food stores, & restaurants
"Intimate" scale of the street scape with smaller businesses - local, diverse, ethnic neighborhood shops
Bakeries, Cha Yen, independent businesses
It's authentic, it's unique, it's a village center - it has character, it's small shops, small restaurants, even small gas station
What makes Coolidge Square a special place is its potential for a growing business community with a local feel. I usually find myself walking to attend a yoga class, pick up a prescription at CVS, shop for baklava at one of the Armenian markets. Etc. I would love to see less vacant commercial spaces or less duplication of similar business types (salons, Laundromats,

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

pizza places). Perhaps the town can think of creative ways to fill these spaces temporarily such as promoting local artists - a rotating artist gallery, a pop up market or house some of the community initiatives by making these efforts more visible in an actual space. Perhaps the town can collaborate with the community on what types of businesses they would like to see come to Coolidge Sq. I like the idea of Watertown being a central hub to many different cultures. I would like to see this as part of Watertown's identity.

### What is missing in Coolidge Square?

Can't go wrong with more of above
Streetscape is a bit barren - street rent [?] signage is kind of low rent - but that also may be part of its charm.
Trees, parking spaces
Parking, green space, bike
<u>Bike Facilities</u>
More pedestrian friendly. Outdoor seating space. Plaza areas for gathering.
Police presence
Wider sidewalks & trees
A nightclub, maybe a theatre. Outside seating
Trees, seating
Safe crossing spot on Mt. Auburn near post office bike lanes. Attractive green (ie: more trees) Parking lot at 7-11 is ugly! I love the idea of outdoor seating (as shown in display Lex of Arlington) Make the area a DESTINATION a pleasant place to go!
A really good coffee shop. More nature
Hubway station
Bicycle lanes, parking for bikes, transit shelters, easy pedestrian crossings, activated public space. Could use more amenities.
Good roads for driving & a bike path. Do NOT consider less than the 2 lanes. It's a DISASTER on Arsenal Street! And I'm a biker...but cars are a reality and I get enraged and frustrated at narrowing drive ways
Pedestrian connectivity
Sidewalk seating for restaurants (glad to see it mentioned!) Also buffers for people getting into and out of parked cars on the street
Curb appeal. Poor and narrow sidewalks, no outdoor seating, trash / poor cleanliness, unsafe pedestrian crossings due to traffic speed
Trees
Inviting outdoor space for sitting, safe pedestrian crossing, attractive store fronts. 7-11 is unsightly; they should be held to a higher standard
More housing
Trees - added behind the shops municipal parking would also be beneficial - cohesive, intimately scaled street lighting
Gathering places
Bookstore, coffee shop - place to hang out
Gathering places, more shopping options, community space

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I would love for Coolidge Square to be less of a "pass-by" center and more of a place where people can congregate or give the community a reason to stay. The only time I've ever seen people congregate is during the Sunday brunch rush (Town Diner and Uncommon) most of the time people hang in the parking lot or outside of the building. They don't think to walk over to other local businesses to check stores out since our stores are pretty limited to draw outsiders. I'd like to see the cultural festivals utilize the Coolidge Sq area and not just hold the event on the church grounds. Perhaps future 5k runs can go through Coolidge Sq and down to the Charles river. I'd like to see a greater sense of community taking place in this area specifically. It would be nice to see if there could be an outdoor path or alleyway that connects the back parking lot behind the Artemis yoga studio to the front of Mt. Auburn street. Everyone I know ends up cutting through the Laundromat on the corner Dewey St to get to the front of Prentiss/Mount Auburn streets.

### Which intersections do you think need safety improvements?

Bigelow & Mt. Auburn
DD is a zoo with constant double parking
Dexter, Arlington
By the post office it needs a warning light (like the crossing at Tufts)
Elton & Mt Auburn both crosswalks
Brighton Ave & Arlington St traffic lights
By the post office needs a warning light
Bigelow Ave.
Elton St.
Bigelow / Mt Auburn
Crosswalk in front of post office. Tufts entrance/exit on Arlington
The whole street
The crosswalk at the split of grave and Arlington. Tufts Health Employees never stop
Dexter, Melendy, Grove & Arlington
Grove & Arlington
Bigelow, Dexter
I don't see safety is a problem and I walk often.
Kimball/Bigelow & Mt Auburn (drivers run this red light very often - looking ahead at Mt Auburn and Arlington)
Dexter/Upland/Mt Auburn. Arlington St/Mt Auburn (needs a few extra seconds on the crosswalk for families pushing strollers to reach the playground)
Arlington/ Grove St. Elton Ave Ped Crossing
Crossing from Upland / Appleton across Mt Auburn! That is one of the closest outlets to Mt Auburn from the neighborhood to Coolidge & the funeral homes, etc. make it dangerous
Suggestion - @Bigelow/Mt Auburn, Strengthen/enhance pedestrian island @ crosswalk - opportunity for tree, lighting and increased space for pedestrians.
Bigelow & Mt Auburn

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

I think the intersections that could use some safety improvements are grove and Coolidge Ave - Starting from the beginning of Grove St on Greenough Blvd to Arlington Street there should be a clear bike and/pedestrian path. Grove Street is not very lit at night and I find it hard to spot pedestrians that are walking or crossing the street at night. Similar thing with bikers as well. In general, Grove street needs to be repaired there has been a lot of pot holes lately.

### Which intersections tend to back up more than others or can be challenging to navigate?

Arlington St. near CVS. & above for which way cars go vs what lane. Arlington Street Belmont St.
Arlington / Mt. Auburn
Dunkin Donuts location is a traffic problem
Arlington/ Grove St. & Mt. Auburn
Arlington in both directions
Bigelow
The above due to Dunkin Donuts double parking
Around funeral home during weekdays
Arlington to Grove
Bigelow Ave; Grove & Arlington
Mt Auburn & Arlington - esp. due to Tufts presence & private police control of public way. Top of Belmont St light backs up all the way toward Mt. Auburn St.
Arlington & Mt Auburn. School St. & Mt Auburn needs left turn lanes (signals)
Melendy and Elton can be difficult to cross due to cars blocking the crosswalk. Bump outs (and parking violation enforcement) would help
Bigelow / Mt Auburn
Arlington/Grove/Mt Auburn
Bigelow
Grove street also tends to be backed up in the mornings and several locals take the side streets to go down Arlington to Arsenal in the morning. Arsenal also is getting more congested by the day.

### When do you think Coolidge Square is most congested?

Area in front / near Dunkin Donuts in morning
7-8:30 AM; 4-6PM
Rush hour
about 7 AM
At rush hour
Morning and evening rush hours - Mt Auburn and Arlington St.

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5-6 PM. One doesn't have shoppers in the morning
7:30-9AM & 5-6:30pm
I know see it congested
7:30-9:30; 4:30-7
evening commute
Rush hour
Commuting times - both morning and evening
Rush hour, morning & evening
Almost never
Commuting times AM & PM
Evening rush hour. It's not so much safety or congestion. It's speed and frustrating to drive and stop, drive and stop
I rarely experience Coolidge Square feeling congested; mostly because I commute to the city very early in the morning and come back very late at night. However, parking on Mt. Auburn is scarce if you are trying to get a spot in front of Dunkin or the yoga studio. I could be wrong but there isn't a whole lot of advertising/signage to let drivers know there is parking behind the row of stores on Mt Auburn. Typically when there is a funeral one lane is taken up on Mt. Auburn but traffic passes pretty quickly once stopped cars are being directed to park elsewhere

### How often do you drive on local streets to avoid traffic on Mt. Auburn Street (in Coolidge Square?)

A lot of people do this on our road as a bypass for Arlington St. lights - hate it. They speed while doing so. They also park for longer than 2 hours on our road because no parking easily available.
Often drive Maplewood but then need to enter Mt. Auburn @ Arlington St. to go to Market, Cambridge
Seldom
I don't
I stay on Mt. Auburn
No
Every day multiple times
very difficult to manage that
To get onto Arlington from Coolidge School I always turn right
Every day
I Don't
All the time
Fairly often
Bike mostly
Multiple times during the day

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Daily
Traffic isn't that bad - never
Often, almost daily now
Every trip involving Mt Auburn usually involves a combination of side streets
Daily
Seldom
All the time
rarely
Always!!
I turn off Mt Auburn ASAP and take back streets
never
There aren't many occasions I find myself in traffic on Mt Auburn unless the unexpected happens (an accident, an emergency vehicle is trying to get through, the MBTA bus is in front of me. etc.

### **What is it like to walk in Coolidge Square? Are there places that feel unsafe for walking or crossing the street?**

New crosswalks, lights near CVS = great!
It can be hairy crossing even in crosswalks as traffic is moving fairly fast and doesn't always stop.
The light at Arlington and Mt Auburn doesn't work consistently
Crossing Mt Auburn at any crosswalk w/o a light is impossible
There are a lot of problems crossing. Not enough crosswalks. Sidewalks need to be wider near Dunks
Elton & Lloyd
Easier than driving
I live at Coolidge School and walk the square a lot. The sidewalks are in such bad shape, they are scary
Too much traffic - cars too fast
Don't really have problems crossing Mt. Auburn St. with walk signals
Crossing Mt. Auburn Street to get to establishments on the other side diminishes the village 'feel'
Crossing at Elton Ave. dangerous. Left turners going west on Mt Auburn block view of crosswalk
It's ugly and often dirty
Crossing street in front of post office is very unsafe. Parked cars on Mt Auburn often extend right up to side street & so crossing side street feels unsafe be pedestrians are not visible.
It's always a bit scary to cross the street and in many places, the sidewalk is too narrow.
Just that intersection I already mentioned. Also, drivers don't always follow rules and go left on red

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No walking issues at all. Crossing at Melendy
Crosswalk at Elton Ave Crossing Mt Auburn; Crosswalk at Dexter
Safety isn't the only issue - it's the perception of safety and the comfort that is lacking. Pedestrians need more priority at Bigelow and Arlington.
Complete street denies the fact that Watertown has explosive growth & double some would say triple the cars. Reducing lanes will increase angry drivers & traffic.
Trash, cracked & disrepaired sidewalks, traffic speeds
Crossing Mt Auburn feels unsafe, even when you have a signal. See my answers in #2 for additional spots
Not pedestrian friendly - uneven sidewalks, trash, stores have pallets or delivery containers on sidewalk
I've had no problems, but I do try to park on the side of Mt Auburn on which the store I'm going to is located.
Crossing from Upland to Fordees feels unsafe
Walkable but difficult to cross. Don't need two lanes in each direction. Sidewalks should be wider
See my comment @item 2 Re: Bigelow/Mt Auburn
Not pleasant, all business. It is about cars! Bigelow is ok to walk
Not comfortable to cross; typically have to wait for cars to stop at cross-walk
Walking to Coolidge - many streets are unsightly, lack shade, lack curbs & sidewalks

### Where would you like to see new crosswalks in Coolidge Square?

Sevan Bakery to B of A ATM - there are long stretches w/o cross walks
I'd like to see the existing ones with walk signals
Dexter @ bus stop
Elton & Lloyd
[Crosswalks] don't help - people don't use them
see last page
Everywhere; Peds should be the default
Led sign with stop burron @ Melendy
West of Bigelow - more frequent
Drive. Walk. Bike.
Across Mt Auburn near Dexter and near Irma
Elton Ave needs a better safer crossing; add crossing near Upland from residential
Yes, please consider longer time for elderly or disabled to cross. Also consider sidewalks wide enough for people with walkers or strollers to walk side by side
Near Stella's /Andrea's or gas station/diner
Need sidewalks on side streets. If you slow the traffic crossings

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**How do you typically travel to Coolidge Square?**

Response Option (multiple selections permitted)	Number of Responses
Drive	24
Walk	24
Bike	11
Ride the Bus	12
Carpool	0
Other	0

**What is the most common purpose of your visit?**

Response Option (multiple selections permitted)	Number of Responses
Shopping/Dining	29
Work	5
School	0
Home	6
Church	0
Recreation	6
Other	5

<b>Other Responses:</b>
park/playground
Bank
Laundromat
Difficult now. When moved here in 2009 it was super easy
Gas Station

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### How difficult or easy is it to find parking in Coolidge Square?

Not easy
Difficult to go to local stores
Seldom a problem except for big events at Hellenic Center
Very difficult. I often want to drop in Armenian stores, and I don't because I can't find parking.
Medium - hard
Fairly easy but the lot is very confusing.
Easy if you choose to park off of Mt Auburn St. no resident parking to be worried about
Moderate
poor
Not easy. Citizens Bank has too many and the best parking spots
Difficult
Manageable
Park in municipal lot easy or at CVS lot
Lot behind CVS is good except Sat/Sun AM
I walk to the square
Easy
Can be a challenge
More on difficult side except for late night
Easy
10 mins - 2 hrs
Very difficult - no availability
Finding parking on Mt Auburn St can be difficult, but I always find a spot on a side street
Not difficult
I love the municipal lot, especially because as a senior I have a pass (from the senior center)
Depends on time/day
Easy
Difficult
Not too difficult
Fairly difficult, depending on time/day
Medium difficult
I try to avoid the meters on Saturdays so I tend to either walk to Coolidge Sq or park on the side streets which can be difficult to find spots. If I drive into Coolidge it usually is because I am running an errand or attending a yoga class.

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### Where and for how long do you typically park when you drive to Coolidge Square?

Usually walk but sometimes have to pick something up near stores - just need loading zone for in & out.
1/2 hr.
1 Hr
15-30 mins on Mt. Auburn near Uncommon Grounds
15-60 min side streets
Depends on task. Dunk 5 min Hardware 10-20 Diner - 1 hr
On Mt. Auburn for 5-10 mins
15 mins
walk
Nor more than an hour
Mt. Auburn St.
2 hours
10-15 mins
On Street or behind bank
Around corner near the PO - but rarely drive
Less than an hour
Elton Ave - 1 hour. Bigelow - 1 hour
I usually walk
2 blocks
Between Elton & Arlington - near post office
I'm either parked for about 5-10 minutes to run errands or an hour or so to go out to dinner. Usually in the 5-10 minute range
Elton Ave, Bigelow or Mt Auburn St. under 2 hours
Municipal lot or meter if available. Length of time: usually 20-30 minutes unless at a restaurant
I walk or do a quick stop by the BOA ATM
.5 hours on Street parking or behind bank
Metered side street space or on Mt Auburn. 15 mins
On Mt Auburn near the Diner. 30-45 mins
Approx. 1/2 hour
15 mins
I generally don't leave my car parked on the street or in the lot for longer than an hour. I typically park in the citizens bank parking lot or in front of Artemis yoga studio. If I am not able to get a spot closer than I park at my building and walk down (.5 miles).

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**How far would you be willing to walk from your parked car to your destination?**

2-3 minutes
Depends on my purpose in being there
Willing 4-5 blocks - prefer less
2-3 blocks
Less than 5 mins
Yes
1 min
2 blocks
5 minutes
5 minutes
5 mins
1/2 block is usual
1 block
No more than 3 minutes
1/4 mile
3-5 mins
500 feet or so. I don't mind walking
~1-2 blocks
2 blocks or so, unless I have a heavy purchase (eg cans of paint) or terrible weather
NA - I live there
5 min walk
2 blocks
1/4 mile
a few blocks
Would ride my bike or walk from home instead
I would prefer to get a spot along mt auburn st or in the parking lot in back of Citizens.

**If you own a business, when do you typically receive deliveries? Does this create any problems?**

NA
yes

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**If you take the bus to/from Coolidge Square, do you use available real-time apps?**

Response Option (multiple selections permitted)	Number of Responses
Yes	15
No	7

**Other Responses:**

I rarely use the bus these days. When I do, I tend to utilize real time apps getting on the bus rather than getting off. The MBTA buses are not as reliable so it couldn't hurt to put a digital marker as to when the bus is expected to arrive in Coolidge Sq.

**Are bus stops conveniently located?**

Yes
No - some convenient stops were removed. Other stops are well located particularly on Cambridge side of Route 71.
Yes
They are fine
Yes, but do you like the proposed changes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Well - I love that just east of Coolidge Sq I have access to both the #71 & 73, which is especially important at night since I live in central Watertown a few blocks from both routes, I tend to drive to Coolidge Sq to get the bus when going to an event in Cambridge or Boston.
More busses that are more on-time
Yes
Yes
Overall, I do think we may want to reconsider a bus stop in front of the town diner and relocate it somewhere else along Mt. Auburn. I would probably use the bus more often if it was more reliable and if there were better indications as to when the bus would be arriving at a certain spot. Google maps helps to a certain extent but it is not always accurate and the bus tends to be even less reliable on the weekends. Even having more buses on route 71 couldn't hurt.

**What improvements or amenities would encourage you to use more frequently?**

Faster, more reliable, less crowding, on-time

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There <u>has</u> to be a different way to collect fares. Buses at rush hour are terribly delayed people paying at front of bus.
Quicker and more frequent bus
Bus shelters
More timely, less crowded buses
Bench was removed at Parker St. Please restore!
There aren't any bus shelters
Bus shelters, easier street crossing
Improving the intersection of Mt Auburn and Fresh Pond/ Alewife Brook Parkway. It's a nightmare
I wont use it most likely, I own a car
Sheltered bus stops
Shelters and more transit priority to improve reliability
More buses
Dedicated bus lanes, bus shelters, benches
Bus stops that feel safe for families w young kids to load and unload. Basically, more room to get on and off the sidewalk away from traffic
I'm thrilled that you are working on this! Coolidge is a Watertown gem. The trick is to enhance it, not ruin it by making it too difficult to own and operate a business or so homogenous looking that it loses its character
Regular reliable MBTA dispatching to keep buses pm schedule

### **Do you have any other comments to share about the Mount Auburn Street project at this time?**

Bus needs to be #1 priority to accelerate - most people over best space usage. Thanks for working towards this.
Side streets could be made 1 way or dead - ended with garden space to make them more attractive, safer residential areas. Also the old unused gas station could be converted into parking or a park. Most bikers drop down through Coolidge Square to the river bike path via Grove St. Important bike path needed here!!
I hate narrowing street into 1 lane. I agree Coolidge St needs to be fixed but the rest of Mt. Auburn St. should be left alone. It is fine the way it is now.
I would like to see the sidewalks repaired and swept. I would appreciate general beautification
more green - trees
I like the prospect of adding bike lanes on Mt. Auburn St. especially if they go all the way to Watertown Square
Carefully consider intersection of Russell Ave. with Mt Auburn St. A lot of cars bypass the Common St. intersection by using Russell and Columbia St. Because Russell meets Mt Auburn at an angle visibility for making left into Mt Auburn is compromised. Realignment of intersection would be desirable!
At Bigelow / Mt Auburn. - Tend Bigelow. Take space from current island to diner for a park with seating, landscaping & bus shelter

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<p>I want to see the project expand to consider how to make the square a pleasant destination - to go to and spend time in. It only seems to be focused on how to move cars, buses, bikes, &amp; pedestrians through the space. Why not take this incredible opportunity to redesign the square beyond the issue of traffic.</p>
<p>If traffic is seriously slowed in the square, drivers who are passing through will be encouraged to go around, which would be good</p>
<p>I'm really excited for this!!!</p>
<p>Don't narrow it's too much. More traffic enforcement would save most of the issues that are proposed. More traffic enforcement for cars, bikes, and pedestrians would equal less construction needed.</p>
<p>Keep the roads as wide as they are. Enforce jay walking. Provide more parking spots. Do something about traffic &amp; parking in front of Dunkin Donuts.</p>
<p>It is unacceptable that bicycle accommodations should be excluded from central area. Consider shared bus/bike lanes. Why is it okay to inconvenience bicyclists but not drivers? It's a question of values. A street is not complete without separate bike lanes with this much traffic. People will not ride without them.</p>
<p>What I see are lots of additions to distress drivers and gives more weight to our almost non-existent pedestrians. But good to see bike lanes taken seriously.</p>
<p>I'm concerned w left turning lanes @ residential neighborhood side streets. In particular the neighborhood north of Mt Auburn Street. Many residents walk with children &amp; pets through these areas and I'm concerned that putting left &amp; turn lanes will encourage cut through traffic especially where topography impacts sight lines at crests</p>
<p>I'm excited to see the complete streets and traffic calming ideas being implemented in the designs. Please keep these. Coolidge Sq and all of Mt Auburn can be used effectively and safely by all road users if the design includes them. I'd like to see the website and emails include more direction to users on how their concerns are being met. I feel like it's a little buried right now. But all in all I appreciate the work you're putting in to getting the information available to the public.</p>
<p>It has potential to be vibrant commercial square. Plan appears very focused on traffic/transportation issues and lacks emphasis on creating district w curb appeal. Sidewalks, cleanliness, trash, signage, outdoor seating, trees. Aesthetic needs to be priority too. National retailers / businesses appear to overwhelm local businesses in terms of signage, lighting &amp; storefronts. This district has so much promise. Don't let transportation overshadow or outweigh placemaking and curb appeal enhancing strategies!!</p>
<p>Traffic calming and complete streets! Enhance</p>
<p>Please consider pedestrian first, and do not put ease of bike travel as a more important criteria than pedestrian travel and safety. [Additional comments sent by email]: Hi Gideon, Thanks for orchestrating the Open House.....seems like there was a good group there, with I'm sure some good input. I did leave some comments there, but felt in retrospect that I could be a bit more clear about elements which I feel would be more cohesive for the area discussed: 1. Trees regularly spaced 2. Lower scaled street lighting regularly spaced 3. Uniform sidewalk paving and curbing 4. More pronounced crosswalks, possibly with different (brick?) paving than the roads I'd suggest that treatment like that will enhance / reinforce the experience of the district for pedestrians, people on bikes, and people in cars / busses. Thanks again for all of your effort and guidance, Dave</p>
<p>We need buffered and double buffered bike lanes. Also wider more pedestrian friendly sidewalks</p>
<p>Thanks for your work on this - long overdue &amp; needed changes!</p>
<p>This project should include side streets and look for ways to share space. Slowing traffic to 10 mi/hr would allow more parking and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists and more pleasant for businesses and customers. Econ development for Coolidge Sq to make it a more desirable, pleasant and inviting destination</p>
<p>My concern is with the bus stop between Ralph Pieteri and Norseman Ave. I'm requesting it be moved closer to Cottage St. As it stands now the bus stops across my driveway so we are detained until the bus moves again. We have also had some</p>

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

incidences in the past where the bus drives too close to parked cars and have damaged the side mirror of my grandson's car. Also we had a trash barrel damaged when a bus hit the barrel as opposed to driving around it. Barrell was on curb edge.

Some empty commercial spaces have been empty a long time. Need more incentives for small businesses (boutiques, specialty, etc.) to move in. What's missing - incentive to stroll around & "window shop;" and bike lanes. (Dunkin Donuts is a tricky intersection! cars don't pay attention in that corridor.) Coolidge Sq. is a mess in traffic - everyone runs the lights!! Where is focus on REDUCING the # of cars? It is unsafe for both bikes & pedestrians. We need speed bumps and fines for running the lights. We need red light cameras in Watertown and speed cameras. We also need the police ON THE STREET not just in their cars.

Feel free to let me know if you have any questions or are in need of community volunteers. I would love to help out in any way I can.

## Appendix B: Coolidge Square Conceptual Map Comments

Comments received on the Coolidge Square Conceptual Maps are organized by topic. Any comments that responded to another comment on the board is included as an indented bullet.

### Planning

- Need more sit-in restaurants
- Make this a bigger park, near Bigelow Avenue
- Near Bigelow, Mt. Auburn and Wells Avenue: can this be a bigger plaza, create pocket park better interaction w/businesses
- Require removal of rooftop billboard signs: if that is achievable
- Wider sidewalk +streetscape to complement shops
- Curb cutouts at corners
- No need for island- Mount Auburn and Bigelow

### Traffic and Safety

- Slow traffic down
- More traffic enforcement for illegal parking and driving violations: that would equal less construction and narrow roadways
- Focus on vehicle traffic flow and less on the 1 percent that use bikes on Mt Auburn street
- Lloyd Rd/Mt. Auburn Street intersection: eliminate parking on corner, no visibility

### Complete Streets and Pedestrian/Bicycle Issues

Vehicle Lane Comments:

- Please consider having stop lights with a left turn arrow at intersections
- I want two car lanes in both directions
  - Not me
  - Ditto
  - Me either
  - Others do not
- I want two car lanes on Mt Auburn Street in both directions
  - Me too!
  - Yes!
  - One car lane is enough
  - One lane in each direction is enough
    - No it's not
  - I don't
- One lane is not enough
- Two lanes on Mount Auburn street
- I think one lane would be sufficient
- One car lanes each way can only work if lights are timed
- I want two lanes in each direction
- Reduce lanes!
- Two lanes on Mt. Auburn Street: specifically, Coolidge Square
- More lanes needed both ways
- Please consider locations with left turn lanes and how they affect the local neighborhoods especially at locations where there is significant cut through traffic

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

### Pedestrian:

- Prioritize safety for: 1. Pedestrians 2. Bikes 3. Cars
- Flashing crosswalk sign w/LED lights: at Mt. Auburn street, Lloyd Road and Elton Avenue intersection
- #pedestrians > # of bikes, lowering speed limit plus more signage will help pedestrians
- Sidewalks wide enough for two people with strollers or walkers to walk side by side or two wheelchairs side by side
- Bike lanes and safer pedestrian crossing please! I'm looking forward to traffic calming
- Benches:
  - Benches with arms- helpful for older adults
    - There are hardly any old people (or any people) walking, not a good investment of taxes
  - Benches with arms
    - Why benches when no one sits on them?
  - Benches are 1/2 mi apart, 1/4 mi or less is better
    - We don't need benches

### Bicycle:

- New bike lanes to reduce auto traffic
  - reducing car traffic when population is exploding is unrealistic and irresponsible!
- Prioritize: bikes, buses, trees, and pedestrians
- Euro-style bike lanes!
- Put bikes on sidewalks with separation: not road
- Please consider putting the bike lane on the sidewalk side of parking
- Glad to see a buffer between bike lanes and parked cars. That will make it safer for everyone
- More enforcement + no sidewalk extensions onto bike paths
- Just say no to dedicated bike lanes
- Bike lanes + bike parking please
- For the amount of bikes that travel on Mt. Auburn a dedicated bike lane is overkill, 2 lanes both ways
  - Agree. Route 16 is a state route not a local road. 2 lanes each way. Add check markers on street to indicate that bikes are ok too (MassDOT is amenable to this option when bike lane is not appropriate)

### Trees:

- No trees or obstacles in width of sidewalk- low vision
- Please include adequate growing conditions for any shade trees planned
- Plants w/town maintenance
- Enhance and create more cohesiveness with: 1. Trees 2. Consistently scaled light posts

### Parking and Loading

- I love the municipal parking lot
- Keep municipal lot
- Municipal lot: make more accessible
- Better access around Dunkin' Donuts

### Transit Operations

- Bus needs to be made a priority, most # of people, bikes will never take the most people
- Keep bus stop at 7/11 where it is now
- Corner of Irma Avenue and Mt Auburn: no bus stop here
- No need for bus stop- 7/11 is only spot for it

## Coolidge Square Open House Summary

### **Other**

- This street will be "busier" once the Arsenal street projects are completed - about Mt Auburn
- I'm looking forward to the changes, making this a manageable area to engage with
- Love this! So needed!