



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

December 7, 2016

Jeffrey Shrimpton
Historic Resources Supervisor
Environmental Services
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Ten Park Plaza, Suite 4260
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Larz Anderson Bridge, Lower Charles River Basin, Boston & Cambridge, MA;
MHC# RC.37613, EEA# 14702

Dear Mr. Shrimpton:

Thank you for submitting a Project Notification Form (PNF) for the project referenced above, which was received at this office on November 7, 2016. The staff of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has reviewed the information submitted and has the following comments.

The proposed project consists of the construction of a pedestrian/bicycle tunnel underpass through the southerly wingwalls of the Anderson Memorial Bridge on the Boston side of the river. The proposed underpass will be 7'8" in height and 18' wide.

The Larz Anderson Bridge (MHC #BOS.9333/CAM.926), surface road approaches and the surrounding parklands are listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places as contributing resources within the Charles River Basin Historic District (CAM.AJ), which is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Like the Longfellow Bridge, the Larz Anderson Bridge is one of the character-defining bridges in the Charles River Basin and is a highly significant historic feature within the landscape.

MHC has determined that the insertion of the pedestrian/bicycle tunnel underpass through the southerly wingwalls will have an "adverse effect" (950 CMR 71.05(a) and 950 CMR 71.07(2)(b)(3)) on the Larz Anderson Bridge through the demolition of portions of the historic bridge wingwalls on the Boston side of the river.

The MHC understands that the project is proposed to provide safe access to bike commuters and pedestrians who travel along the Charles River. While the proposed project will be an "adverse effect" to the historic bridge, MHC understands that it is a very important life safety improvement to the area for those pedestrians and bicyclists who use this route.

MHC understands that MassDOT, has explored two other alternatives to the proposed underpass project. The MHC understands that the Boardwalk Alternative would obstruct navigation on the river, would be visually intrusive to the arches of the historic bridge, and is not the safest option for bicyclists and pedestrians. The MHC understands that the Deep Tunnel Alternative was not a prudent or feasible alternative, since it would be below the water table and require constant pumping to keep water out of the tunnel. MHC understands that both the Boardwalk Alternative and Deep Tunnel Alternative are not prudent and feasible.

The MHC hereby initiates the MHC's consultation process pursuant to 950 CMR 71.07(3). By copy of this letter, the MHC invites the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC), Boston Preservation Alliance, and Charles River Conservancy to the consultation process.

The MHC accepts the adverse effect and proposes the development of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in order to resolve the adverse effect. The MHC requests input from the consulting parties on potential mitigation stipulations.

The MHC recommends the following stipulation as mitigation for the insertion of the of the pedestrian/bicycle tunnel underpass through the southerly wingwalls of the Larz Anderson Bridge:

- 1) MassDOT shall submit an updated Bridge Inventory Form for the Larz Anderson Bridge (MHC#BOS.9333/CAM.926), with current and historic period photographs to the MHC, BLC and Cambridge Historical Commission; and
- 2) MassDOT shall submit design drawings for the proposed pedestrian/bicycle underpass to MHC, BLC, DCR, at 50% and 90% completion, for review and approval.

These comments are offered to assist in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 9, sections 26-27C (950 CMR 71.00). Please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Sherva of my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Brona Simon
State Historic Preservation Officer
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

xc: Patrice Kish, DCR
Rosanne Foley, Boston Landmarks Commission
Charles Sullivan, Cambridge Historical Commission
Greg Galer, Boston Preservation Alliance
Renata von Tscharmer, Charles River Conservancy