

Commissioner Martin Suuberg
DEP
1 Winter Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

July 30, 2015

Dear Commissioner Suuberg:

I am writing to oppose the granting of a Chapter 91 License to the University of Massachusetts on Columbia Point because the Conditions set forth as a result of previous License applications have not been met.

While cyclists and wheelchair bound users are excited about the new section of Harborwalk recently constructed and opened by the University, the existing, older Harborwalk sections along the west and south sides of the peninsula, have not been “kept in good repair” as the license calls for, making for an unpleasant and dangerous ride for wheeled vehicles. After many years of exposure to the elements, the pavement has deteriorated, and at every 10-12 feet is a rut. These ruts could catch a wheelchair wheel or could result in bent wheel rims on bicycles should the user not be cautious. Please see enclosed images.

I do not want to be an obstructionist in the advancement of the University’s 25 year master plan, but this has been a known issue for many years that has fallen on deaf ears at the University. Most people I speak to prefer to cycle on the perimeter road, which is now impossible due to the utility relocation project. It is my hope that through this licensing process your agency can compel the University to keep the multi-use waterfront trail in good repair as their signed license requires them to.

Additionally, I’d like to address the current application with this comment:

The buffer area between the Harborwalk and any road ways is very generous along virtually all of the Harborwalk that surrounds Columbia Point except along a 350 foot section, which is contiguous to the parking area being developed in this current application. (see attached image). That trail section has about 8 feet of grassy swale between the Harborwalk and the circulation lanes for the parking

area. I would like to see a more commodious landscaped buffer in this area; perhaps a doubling from 8 to 16 feet.

Thank you,

Paul Nutting

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