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Metro

Commuter rail stop in Allston-Brighton to be built to serve proposed New Balance development

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT | JUNE 07, 2012

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Elected leaders representing the Allston-Brighton area announced Wednesday night that the state and New Balance have agreed to build a long-awaited commuter rail station in conjunction with the shoe company's proposed \$500 million development there.

The station along the Framingham/Worcester commuter rail line is expected to cost about \$16 million, state Representative Michael J. Moran said during a public meeting at WGBH headquarters in Brighton Wednesday night. Allston-Brighton currently has no commuter rail stops.

New Balance would fund all permitting, design, construction and annual maintenance costs, a company official said. It was not clear whether any public funding would be involved in building the station.

A formal announcement is expected to be made Thursday.

The station would be located near Everett Street and near where New Balance plans to build a new headquarters, sports complex, hotel, and up to three office buildings, as well as retail, restaurant, parking, and green space, according to Moran.

The stop would be called New Brighton Landing and would be built according to state transportation department specifications and approval, officials said.

Moran said a timetable for when the station's construction would begin and end has not yet been determined. But he said the plan is for the station to be built in conjunction with New Balance's proposed development on a nearby 14-acre stretch.

It would be completed "as soon as possible," he said.

The athletic apparel company has said it hopes to start work on its development as soon as this fall and complete the six-phase, 1.45 million square foot project by 2017.

Moran said Richard A. Davey, secretary of the state transportation department, and James S. Davis, New Balance chairman and former chief executive, signed a letter of intent committing to build the station.

Moran made the announcement alongside State Representative Kevin G. Honan and Boston City Councilor Mark Ciommo, all of whom represent the Allston-Brighton area, during a city-hosted public hearing about New Balance's development plans. The news was met with applause from more than 50 people at the meeting.

"It's going to be transformative. I don't think there will be anything that's more important that we do as a delegation [of the Allston-Brighton community] than helping to bring this commuter rail stop," Moran said.

In 2009, the state's transportation department studied the potential for a new commuter rail station in Allston-Brighton, but officials said, even as recently as a few months ago, that plans for a station were not being pursued and one would not be built in the area for decades.

"I cannot underscore the importance of Jim Davis, the person, not just New Balance, the company, in this,"

Moran said.

“This is a public-private partnership of extraordinary proportions,” Honan added.

Sal Pinchera, a longtime Allston resident said the development and commuter rail stop will be “great” additions.

“The Pike cut us off years ago, and a commuter rail stop can reconnect us, but only if we can get to it easily,” he said.

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