

## Northern Ave. Bridge: June 3, 2019 Community Meeting #2 Feedback via Email

Key Themes	Email Comments
Restore for pedestrian and bicyclist use	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Imagine my surprise when I showed up to the "community feedback" meeting tonight which included zero (0) actual community feedback. Please do not insult my intelligence by claiming "breakout groups" are the same as real community feedback. They're actually quite useless and really only good for trying to divide and conquer community groups and their supporters (like me) who show up to these meetings. I remember when Mayor Marty was trying to push that equally disastrous Olympics bid, at least one of those (useless) community feedback meetings had breakout groups too. Everyone involved in structuring tonight's meeting should be ashamed of themselves and never let this kind of nonsense happen again. Like a great many people in that room, ones who actually live in the area, unlike one of the "let's make the bridge into a superhighway" people near me, whom I spotted driving his BMW, probably to the suburbs (or maybe even to New Hampshire: I didn't think to check his plates) from the meeting, I very strongly want the Northern Ave Bridge to be repaired (and not in any of the monstrous iterations that were shown as new designs in the slideshow) and to be used solely for people who are walking or people who are on bikes. Unlike the small but loud superhighway contingent, I actually used the Northern Ave bridge when it was open and remember how it was more than once so crowded with people walking across it that I had to get off my bike and walk. I'm not complaining because it was a really pleasant route and had a direct connection to the Harbor Walk (where I could get on my bike again). For tonight's so-called community meeting I biked across one of the parallel bridges which, as always, was pretty treacherous for anyone who is not driving a motor vehicle, even for an experienced urban bike commuter. It's why even though I live about a mile from the Northern Ave Bridge I rarely go to Seaport these days, including to the ICA which I used to visit often. Seaport, with its devotion to car traffic above all else is an incredibly unpleasant place to walk or bike in (except for Harbor Walk. but I guess a lot of that has been illegally co-opted by private development because why should anyone in charge actually enforce public land remaining public?) I seriously doubt that I am only person who doesn't enjoy spending time walking or biking in a place that resembles a shopping mall parking lot with an endless array of exit roads. We avoid that area completely whenever possible.</p> <p>So what I'm hoping, since no one in charge of this fiasco seems to care about quality of life or safety issues for people walking or biking in the area is: that you will care that having a big pseudo-mall where walking or biking is extremely difficult will actually harm the businesses in the area, as fewer and fewer young people in Boston own cars, more and more of them will avoid a neighborhood that makes them feel unwelcome if they're not in one. Letting the Northern Ave Bridge revert to its use (once it's repaired) as a place exclusively for people to walk or bike will help a growing sector of Boston (which will be even larger when construction is completed) to feel more like visiting that neighborhood and more likely to patronize its businesses-- and the museum. I really hope you folks actually read this email and heed it and the similar ones from the many other people in the room, and those who couldn't make it, who feel as I do. One last thing. Like a lot of people in Boston I live in a building that is over 100 years old, which unlike the Northern Ave Bridge has not been allowed to crumble into such disrepair that the only solution posited is to completely replace it, especially with designs that are as ugly and clashing with the existing architecture in the area as the proposed new bridges in the slide show of tonight's meeting. Those cutesy lines about the bridge being a "hospice patient" ignores that we actually live in a very old city, one of the oldest in the US and in fact the "hospice patient" historic neighborhoods in Boston are a big part of why tourists and new residents come here. So maybe instead of trying to elicit easy laughs, take some responsibility for how the bridge has been allowed to rot. I know it won't get you any giggles, but it might get you a little respect and will show some much needed honesty and transparency.</p>
Replicate look of old bridge; Pedestrian/bicyclist/bus use	<p>I attended the public community meeting at District Hall earlier this evening. After leaving the meeting and thinking about the presentations, I have a suggestion for your consideration.</p> <p>There is clearly an emotional attachment to the old bridge. However, the reality of repairing the old bridge is simply unrealistic given it's condition. Therefore why not replicate the look of the old bridge, but at a smaller scale...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the new bridge would architecturally look like the old bridge when looking at it from the side view (eg from the Moakley bridge)</li> <li>- the new bridge would not be as wide as the old bridge</li> <li>- the new bridge would feature a center lane wide enough for emergency vehicles / buses (25'?)</li> <li>- there would be two lanes on each side of the center lane (12.5' each?)</li> <li>- this design could be utilized as follows... the center lane could be used for buses bringing commuters into the Seaport between 7am and 10am. After that the center lane can be used for bicycles until 4pm when it reverts back to buses taking commuters out of the Seaport. At 7pm it's back to bicycles. When bicycles are using the center lane the two 12.5' lanes would be used for pedestrians. When buses are using the center lane, bicycles use one of the 12.5' lanes and pedestrians use the other 12.5' lanes.</li> </ul>
Overcrowding on Atlantic Ave	<p>I would like you to further address the issue of traffic overflow onto Atlantic Avenue should vehicular traffic be permitted on the Northern Avenue Bridge. I felt that the response to the question when asked last night was not adequate. As a resident I have serious concerns about the amount of cars currently coming off Seaport Blvd and the overcrowding on Atlantic Avenue. Adding more vehicles will continue to cause obstruction for emergency vehicles of any kind making their way through.</p>
Pedestrian/bicyclist/bus use	<p>This bridge should be focused on the most efficient ways to move people, which is walking, biking and buses. There should be a dedicated and protected bike lane, otherwise people will not have alternatives to driving, and the traffic will just get worse and worse. There already is a car-centric way to get to the Seaport, let's focus on equitable transport for everyone, and solutions based on science.</p>
Pedestrian/bicyclist/vehicular use; at least 52'	<p>Good Afternoon,</p> <p>I attended the meeting last evening at District Hall. Thank you for providing such useful information.</p> <p>I am commenting both as a resident of the Seaport and long-time business owner in the neighborhood. We employ over 200-people here in the Seaport and access into and out of this neighborhood is crucial to the short and long-term survival of our employee-owned business. With housing prices where they are in Boston, plenty of my fellow employee-owners cannot afford to live close enough to bike or walk so vehicular access is key. Plenty drive and others take buses from North Station or even the Silver Line from Chelsea and South Station.</p> <p>I would like to strongly support the bridge being rebuilt to at least 52' to allow for separate and safe pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic, even if restricted vehicles to just take some pressure off the other channel crossings.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration and please let me know if you have any questions.</p>

Historic restoration; Pedestrian/bicyclist/emergency vehicle use	Dear Team, Here is my input re the future Northern Avenue Bridge. I'm rooting for a spectacular historic restoration so that the bridge serves pedestrians and bicyclists and emergency vehicles only. We do NOT want to promote greater ease for yet more cars, shuttles, buses and trucks to take over our great city! Thank you.
Preservation; Pedestrian, no vehicular traffic	Dear Mayor Walsh: As a long-term Boston resident that used the Northern Ave bridge to gain access to the city on a daily basis, I am committed to working toward preserving the historic bridge as a pedestrian, non-motor vehicle, vibrant, open-view bridge.
Pedestrian/bicyclist use	No car traffic on the bridge - only bike & pedestrian. It is time to break out of the "cars belong" mentality.
Vehicular use	To the Northern Ave Bridge Boston Team, Thank you for your work on ensuring a productive future for this great Boston asset. I am writing to express emphatic support for vehicular use of the bridge. The Harpoon Distributing Company (which distributes Mass Bay Brewing Company products, e.g. Harpoon beer) relies on accessible roadways in and out of the Seaport. Five to eight truckloads of product originate daily at the brewery which is located at 306 Northern Ave.. These trucks serve over 1,000 retailers in the greater Boston-area and the viability of our business is dependent on timely deliveries. The Seaport, and the businesses located there, are challenged by limited transportation access and the prospect of even greater congestion when the new construction comes on line. In addition to the trucking activity of the Harpoon Distributing Company, the on-going operations of the Mass Bay Brewing Company require vehicle access for employees, suppliers, and visitors to our Seaport facility. Utilization of the Northern Avenue Bridge is essential to the future of our business which employs 179 people here at 306 Northern Ave. Thank you for considering these points, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.
Pedestrian/bicyclist use; Retail and sitting/rest areas	Hi, I've already submitted the comment form, but it was pretty limited in scope. Attached please find a concept I mentioned in the form.. It's not to scale, it's just a concept. showing Retail loaded to one side, with bike lanes, areas to sit, walk, rest, and gather. thank you
Historic; Pedestrian/bicyclist/emergency vehicle use	I am writing in support of the Bold or Old campaign. After such a wonder design competition, I am disappointed in the process and the fact that the City is not exploring how to reuse the historic bridge. Data show, and the people clearly want, a pedestrian, bike, and emergency access span only. No cars, no shuttle, no HOV. Thanks.
Basic; 42' or 56'; Pedestrian/bicyclist/emergency vehicle use	Thank you for taking the time on Monday to update the community on the Northern Avenue Bridge project. I did not get a chance to fill out a survey at the end of the meeting, but let me provide my thoughts here. I am a resident of District 2 and walk the streets in and around the Northern Avenue bridge frequently. My utmost concern is for the safety of the pedestrians walking the crowded streets in this section of the Seaport. It is dangerous enough with the relatively narrow road and sidewalks of Northern Avenue, but the thought of buses and other vehicles moving quickly through the streets or backed up because of traffic on the bridge worries me even more. I am in favor of a pedestrian and bicycle bridge that can accommodate emergency vehicles and evacuation for rare but significant emergencies. The city's own traffic studies show that there will be little improvement in traffic flow to and from the Seaport given the limits of the one-way Atlantic Avenue flow on the western end of the bridge. At the same time, I appreciate the arguments that in the rare case of a significant emergency, the bridge should be able to accommodate emergency vehicles. My suggestion is to design the bridge with the aesthetics of a pedestrian and bicycle bridge. That is, there are no white and yellow painted traffic lines for the vehicles. Perhaps instead, embedded lights in the pavement could be illuminated to guide the way when emergency vehicles use the bridge. I am in favor of a Basic design, with the aesthetics of a contemporary pedestrian and bicycle bridge. The Restore option is too expensive and given the transformation of Fan Pier and the surrounding land from parking lots to tall modern buildings, I don't think that design fits the surroundings anymore. The other designs are much more expensive and I think that the city could find better uses for those funds. Plus, I like the idea of unobstructed vistas when walking on the bridge. From the presentation on Monday, a 42' wide bridge seems like a good choice, though I would not object to a 56' bridge to offer future additional flexibility for nominal additional cost. Thank you for considering my suggestions.
Pedestrian design to reduce crosswinds	I parked in the mud flats and crossed the bridge daily. I especially loved when it was just a walking bridge with planters. Crossing the bridge can often be difficult during adverse weather or even on a nice windy day. Please make sure the pedestrian area design reduces the crosswinds that come off the harbor.
Contextual design	Hello: Thanks for soliciting public opinion on this project. To me, it's a no-brainer.....go with the Contextural design that evokes images of the Tall Ships and a harbor feel. This is a no-brainer, but I fear the City of Boston will go with a cheaper version. For once, do the right thing. We should be making every attempt to beautify the city and make is distinctively Boston.
Pedestrian/bicyclist use	Thank you for your work in updating this bridge. This bridge has been used exclusively by more environmentally friendly modes of transit, and I strongly support keeping this as a pedestrian/cycling/mass-transit bridge only. If we want to stop the constant gridlock in Boston, we need to de-prioritize cars and make it much easier to use mass transit or use more environmentally friendly modes of transit.
Pedestrian/bicyclist use	Hello, I was not able to make the community meeting earlier this week, but I read the project update and want to make my comments here. I appreciate that you have now brought into consideration a more narrow bridge that will be for pedestrians and cyclists only. However, I am concerned that you are still considering an option for vehicles. Saying you are designing for "flexibility" just means that eventually, someone will want to put a road on the bridge. It also will greatly increase the price and limit the design options. Lets make this a bridge for people. We have survived this long without vehicles on that bridge, so why do we suddenly "need" it? I understand the need for bus lanes, so why not convert one of the lanes on Seaport Blvd into a bus lane? Anyway, long story short, lets take the chance to make this bridge people first, and make it a world-class bridge for pedestrians and cyclists. Thanks.

Pedestrian/bicyclist/emergency vehicle use	<p>Greetings Team,</p> <p>I attended the presentation you made at District Hall the other night. Thanks for that. I do have some questions/comments..... I'm worried that "The Pavilion" idea is driving some of the design and/or width decisions. I hope it is not but wonder about the requirement for emergency vehicles on the bridge? Are we worried about servicing an imagined "pavilion" at some future point in time. Wouldn't the Moakley Bridge be the logical route for Emergency traffic? Also, won't raising the plane of the bridge lead to a lot more difficulties for vehicular traffic to access the bridge (than pedestrians and bikes)? You don't have a lot of room to create a reasonable approach slope.</p> <p>Anyway, I hope we can build a bridge that accommodates walkers and bikes and if there is a real need for one lane emergency traffic, would do that as well.</p> <p>Cheers</p>
Preservation of bridge; Pedestrian/bicyclist use	<p>Dear Mayor Walsh,</p> <p>I wanted to go to the community meeting about this bridge Monday night, but was unable to because I was caring for 2 young grandchildren.</p> <p>However, I want to express my strong support for preserving this historic bridge. When I moved to Boston 40 years ago, I was struck by how iconic and how uniquely Boston this bridge was.</p> <p>It is important that it be a pedestrian and bike only bridge. I grew up in the Washington DC area where traffic is horrible. Every time car traffic got bad and more lanes were added to the beltway, more cars came. Traffic jams were not alleviated. Transportation issues are a major problem in Boston, and our city needs to be a leader in encouraging carless means of transportation.</p>
Turn it into a sculpture	<p>I attended the meeting.</p> <p>How about turning it into a sculpture.</p> <p>Leave it basically as it is. In the open position.</p> <p>Maintain it enough to keep from danger.</p> <p>Paint it black.</p> <p>It presents the history that the presevationists want. It doesn't cost a great deal of money, and the people can continue to walk over the existing bridges.</p>
	<p>My neighbors and I are concerned that the voices of Seaport residents have not been heard as clearly as they should be. The Seaport is a new neighborhood and doesn't have a well established neighborhood association so the residents and owners who live in the Seaport are not formally organized as for example, the Fort Point Neighborhood Association.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is clear that the voice of Seaport owners is getting lost in the crowd and I would urge very clearly that the viewpoints of the Seaport residential owners are unique and those distinct concerns and priorities need to be considered separately from other neighborhoods and other visitors to the Seaport.</li> <li>○ The Seaport is where we live, it is not just a place we visit transiently to work or hang-out, we live here with our families and are committed to the success of the community.</li> <li>● Participation of the Fan Pier residential community in this focum is critically important to the discussion about the future of the Northern Ave Bridge because our neighborhood is tremendously impacted, and uniquely so, because we are isolated on Fan Pier and are disproportionately exposed to risk from emergency or terrorist activity at the Moakley Federal Courthouse.</li> <li>● Northern Ave Bridge needs to be rebuilt and very much appreciate investment from committee members as stewards to make sure our community navigates a set of difficult decisions in the best possible way for the neighborhood and City of Boston</li> <li>● The bridge needs to carry vehicles traffic in some capacity everyday, permanently, for a few reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To relieve rush-hour congestion as well as general traffic congestion to/from Seaport</li> <li>○ Provide emergency access and egress for emergency vehicles as well as residents, workers, and visitors of the Seaport.</li> <li>■ If there is an emergency, it would be regrettable not to have enough space for emergency vehicles as well as room for people, bikes, and cars to evacuate the Seaport (and the future Pavilion development)</li> <li>■ The Federal Courthouse poses potential for emergency situations unlike other areas and structures in the City. High profile trials take place there and the Courthouse is considered a primary target in New England. US Marshals might have to divert traffic patterns to get people safely evacuated from the CourtHouse and adjacent buildings. An attack on the Courthouse would likely require a fleet of emergency vehicles.</li> <li>○ Reliable alternative when one of the other bridges is unavailable for scheduled or unexpected reasons (e.g., terrorist attack, bridge break down, unpredictable environmental or structural event)</li> <li>● As residential owner who commutes from the Seaport to another Boston neighborhood for work, I can say with confidence that permanent, dedicated personal vehicle lanes on the bridge will help alleviate the egregious traffic that is currently experienced getting in and out of the Seaport (during both rush hour and non rush hour times)</li> <li>○ To limit concerns about induced demand, could make the bridge vehicle lanes Seaport resident-only (not Fort Port, not Southie, just residents of Seaport proper) traffic lane on the bridge. Use a license plate reader (like on Mass Pike) to monitor bridge access and send automatic tickets (\$100) to non-residents who drive on the bridge. Residents would likely be willing to pay a nominal fee (\$20) to register their vehicle, which would cover the administrative costs of the program. Then, use the proceeds from the traffic violation ticket (i.e., non-residents driving on the bridge) to fund Seaport community events and improvements.</li> <li>● The 56ft bridge option gives opportunity to have all of the following:</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>Vehicular use; 56'; incorporate lighting; contextual; high enough for boat traffic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wide pedestrian area on one of the water sides of the bridge (peds/dogs exclusive path, safe, distinct from the vehicle and bike travel lanes; with room for walking patterns in both directions - which can be accomplished on one side of the bridge do not need walking lanes on both sides)</li> <li>○ 2-way bike lanes on one of the water sides of the bridge (2 directionally dedicated lanes, safe, distinct from the vehicle and pedestrian travel areas)</li> <li>○ 2-way private vehicle travel lanes in the middle of the bridge (physically distinct from bike and pedestrian travel areas; sufficient space to allow emergency vehicle access as needed, without having to divert ped/bike traffic.)</li> <li>○ Inspiration could include the ped/bike lanes of the Nesciobrug in Amsterdam or Puente de la Mujer in Buenos Aires plus additional width to allow for separated car travel lanes (in parallel but very separate/distinct lanes)</li> <li>● Consider incorporating lighting into the bridge</li> <li>○ Lighting the Prudential Center with colors to support local nonprofits and sports teams has become a cherished tradition among Bostonians. We could do something similar with beautiful bridge lighting.</li> <li>○ San Francisco did an amazing light art installation on the San Francisco Bay Bridge. It is breathtaking and "The Bay Lights" is loved by both local residents and tourists alike. <a href="https://www.sftravel.com/article/what-you-need-know-about-bay-lights-worlds-largest-light-art-installation">https://www.sftravel.com/article/what-you-need-know-about-bay-lights-worlds-largest-light-art-installation</a></li> <li>○ The Seaport has started to establish some shared public art and "Harbor Lights" would be a great extension of this experience in the Seaport, making the Northern Ave Bridge sparkle alongside the Boston skyline.</li> <li>○ The city has recently dedicated a portion of its annual Capital Budget for commissioning permanent public art - perhaps they can subsidize this project.</li> <li>● Design: contextual - beautiful design that evokes memories of the sails in the harbor and the Zakim bridge.</li> <li>● Height: as a boater who enjoys boating in Boston Harbor, would support raising the bridge over the navigation channel to a height equal to the Moakley Bridge (Seaport Blvd Bridge) to allow the greatest number of boats to pass through the channel and to preserve boat access to the Barking Crab, Children's Museum, and Intercontinental docks. A fixed bridge would need to be sufficient height to not obstruct boat traffic during highest tides.</li> </ul>
<p>Vehicular use</p>	<p>To Whom it May Concern</p> <p>I am a condominium resident at the seaport. This bridge is crucial to alleviate the traffic congestion that occurs every evening . Please consider my vote strongly in this equation.</p> <p>So many more boilings are being built, with garages, that means more cars...an no real public transportation!</p> <p>Thank You</p>
<p>Vehicular use; wide as possible; Contextual</p>	<p>Hi</p> <p>Thanks for your efforts on the very important project for those of us who live in the Seaport and also for the future of entire city.</p> <p>I dont know how much of the comment form will show so to be sure:</p> <p>I feel the bridge should be a connector and an invitation to and from the Seaport for all uses. . It can be an icon and a true statement that the City embraces and is proud of the innovation and edge of the Seaport district. That it is truly part of Boston. ( Boston Globe take note ).</p> <p>the widest possible bridge for walking jogging bikes and cars in and out. --of course emergency vehicles. There are only more people and cars coming to Seaport --not less. Perhaps even free --or very reasonable, city trolleys back and forth over the bridge providing even more of a connection .</p> <p>The contextual bridge is my choice. Its inviting and current and reflects the harbor movement and feeling.</p> <p>The old bridge should be removed as soon as possible --it is a dangerous eyesore. Its historical relevance can be preserved in an art competition using some of its parts. It has served us well. Its time has come.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
<p>Vehicular use; multi-function; contemporary; resiliency</p>	<p>Hello. Apologies for the delayed reply, but just realized the deadline was almost upon me.</p> <p>I attended both a briefing several months ago at 50 Liberty and another more recently at Gather. I appreciated the team's presentation and patience with the too many impolite and selfish folks in attendance - especially at the Gather meeting. Disappointing so many have no regard for the time or views of others.</p> <p>I both reside and work in the Seaport. I am thrilled to be able to walk to work and many of my social commitments. That said, I do own a car and drive in and out of the Seaport with some frequency, mostly weekends - and also by taxi, etc to various other parts of town throughout the week. I know the congestion well.</p> <p>While the old bridge is very interesting architecturally and maybe historically, if the range of estimates you provided (which I have no reason to doubt - based on my own experience walking over and past it for the past 30 years), any "salvage" beyond rebuilding the piers would really be a new bridge. It seems beyond comprehension fully "restoring" / recreating that bridge today given the degree of deterioration.</p> <p>Regarding the options you put forth. My FIRST concern is multi function. It needs to be available to support auto / bus / truck traffic. Wide sidewalks and bike lanes are fine, but ensure traffic can pass. Whether or not it be restricted to certain vehicles can be debated later.</p> <p>Style. I prefer contemporary. I love the city's history, but don't like so much fake history of "Disney - like" recreations. Keep it simple and functional (more below), and remember - it is a neighborhood low / moderate capacity bridge - not the public garden or ted Williams tunnel. I prefer getting something tasteful, useful and practical done NOW (or soon) rather than chasing windmills on something too ambitious. No view on size, but close to current width seems reasonable - aside from perhaps cost concessions to be a bit narrower.</p> <p>My only ask (as a resident and tax payer) is that full consideration to resiliency be built in. I am less referring to rising water, etc, but rather Boston weather. Nothing bothers me more than seeing new or recent roads and bridges fall into poor shape so quickly. Moakley has been deteriorating for years now. Looks OK from a distance, but walk over it - it needs help.</p> <p>Everything needs maintenance, but it doesn't seem to get full attention at inception of projects. Making things that will last, and in the case of maintenance - EASY to fix / repair, paint. Things like perhaps powder coating (or similar) vs regular paint.</p> <p>Thank you and best regards.</p>

<p>Vehicular use - one-way based on time of day</p>	<p>Hello Team,</p> <p>I am a resident in the Seaport, but have been out of town for each of the recent general public meetings. I have read the minutes from the two most recent meetings. One suggestion which I haven't seen in the literature I've read thus far would be to make the vehicle traffic one-way only but have that direction change with time of day/traffic circulation needs. For example, traffic flow into Seaport District from 3am-noon &amp; out of Seaport from noon-3am or something similar. Perhaps this would reduce size/cost of bridge, but serve to alleviate circulation issues in the area.</p> <p>Sorry if I missed an earlier meeting with this - but wanted to throw it out for what it is worth.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
<p>Preservation; Pedestrian, bicyclist, emergency vehicle use; Restore</p>	<p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>I write to advocate strongly for the preservation of the Northern Avenue Bridge. I am an architectural historian with a special expertise in the buildings and landscapes of New England.</p> <p>I attended the Northern Avenue Bridge Community Meeting on June 3rd at District Hall, listened to the presentations, and considered each of the proposed schemes for the bridge. The meeting itself was deeply disappointing as the City did not fully discuss options for restoring the bridge nor did the meeting's format give the large number of people who attended enough information about the proposed options. Presenters were unable to answer questions with any specificity and did not appear to take seriously some of the concerns expressed by the audience. As a result, the meeting did not meet even the most basic standard for community participation or involvement, instead, it confirmed my view that the City is not conducting an open, transparent, collaborative, and responsive decision-making process for the Northern Avenue Bridge.</p> <p>The only acceptable scheme for the Northern Avenue Bridge is one that preserves as much of the structure's historic fabric as possible. The bridge is an iconic element of the Fort Point Channel neighborhood and tells the story of Boston's industrial maritime past. It is a welcome survival in neighborhood that is now largely overwhelmed by the Seaport District's homogenous, banal, characterless towers. The Northern Avenue Bridge should be celebrated for its place in the development of maritime Boston, for its place in the history of technological innovation, and for its gritty beauty. The City should recognize the opportunity a preserved and restored Northern Avenue Bridge could present as a "High Line"-like gateway to Fort Point Channel and the Seaport District. Across the country, cities are recognizing the possibilities for historic industrial infrastructure to enhance urban quality of life. Surely Boston can do the same.</p> <p>I ask that the City explore more alternatives to preserving the Northern Avenue Bridge than the single, simplistic, and costly approach presented at the June 3rd meeting. The City needs to take into account approaches to preservation that are less costly than the one proposed, but that will also retain the Bridge's character-defining features. By only presenting one alternative for preservation the City is not being fully transparent about the costs of restoration vs. replacement and appears to be acting in bad faith. We need more information before we allow the obliteration of one of the last vestiges of this important piece of our City's history.</p> <p>It is vitally important that a restored Northern Avenue Bridge only accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and emergency vehicle access. There was no persuasive information presented at the June 3rd meeting that would support an argument for regular vehicular access across the Northern Avenue Bridge.</p> <p>We all need to recognize that reducing automobile use is our path to a sustainable future and the City of Boston itself has taken affirmative steps along that path by committing to reducing carbon emissions through encouraging mass transit use, walking, and biking. Because our future must be one with fewer cars, allowing regular vehicular access across Fort Point Channel is short-sighted and runs directly counter to the City's stated objectives. Creating a safe, comfortable, iconic crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists will also greatly enhance the livability and sustainability of the neighborhoods adjacent to the site. It will be a draw for people walking along the Rose Kennedy Greenway to find their way to the harbor's edge and to take in views of the city from a unique and compelling perspective. The best urban design is not oriented solely toward moving vehicles efficiently through the city; it is, instead, focused on producing spaces that are welcoming, pathways that are enjoyable, and experiences that are memorable. Boston has these kinds of spaces – and the Greenway is the newest – but the Seaport and Fort Point Channel largely do not. This is an opportunity to provide a compelling piece of urban design that incorporates a historic, iconic structure and reinforces Boston's most vital commodity: its sense of place.</p> <p>Last, the City must commit itself to an open, transparent, informed public process for the Northern Avenue Bridge. Thus far, from what I have seen, it has not. Public input should have the highest priority and carry the greatest amount of weight in any decisions concerning the bridge's design. In addition, the City needs to honor the commitment it made in 1977 to the Massachusetts Historical Commission to find a long-term preservation solution for the Bridge. In order to retain the faith and trust of city residents, Boston must live up to its obligations to preserve this vital piece of the city's history.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to present my views. I would be happy to speak further with you about the preservation of the Northern Avenue Bridge.</p>
<p>Vehicular use</p>	<p>I think it's important that the replacement bridge for this project be capable of supporting vehicles.</p> <p>Before deciding whether vehicular traffic should be allowed it would be wise to study how using the bridge for vehicles will improve the traffic back up that regularly occurs on the Seaport Blvd bridge at multiple points during the day. It's not obvious to me how it will given where the traffic exits from the bridge on to Atlantic Ave.</p> <p>That said given the lifespan of bridges it seems unwise to invest that much money and not have the option of supporting vehicles now or in the future.</p>