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# Press Release

For Immediate Release – October 30, 2017

## Conceptual design for Columbian Square to be presented at public meeting

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Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today that Weymouth’s Planning and Community Development Department will host a public meeting to unveil the Town’s recommended conceptual design for vehicle and pedestrian safety improvements at Columbian Square. The meeting will take place Wednesday, November 8th, at 7:00 pm in the Weymouth High School’s Mary J. Livingstone Humanities Center (1 Wildcat Way). There will be a brief presentation, followed by an opportunity for public comment and questions. The meeting will be facilitated by Green International Affiliates of Westford.

“The economic future and revitalization of Columbian Square depends on a safer, more walkable village center for shoppers, neighbors, and business people alike,” **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. “The Planning Department, Green International, and the Columbian Square working group have done an outstanding job designing these improvements and providing a plan to achieve Weymouth’s economic priorities.”

A conceptual design report for improvements to Columbian Square was last prepared by the Cecil Group of Boston in 2008. Proposed improvements at that time included constructing a signalized intersection, extending sidewalks, creating new public space, and generally making the square safer for vehicles and pedestrians.

Recognizing that conditions in the square had changed since 2008, Mayor Hedlund and the Weymouth Town Council appropriated \$20,000 in Union Point mitigation funds in June of 2016 to review and update the Cecil Group’s report based on up-to-date traffic data and new strategies for enhancing mobility and safety in downtown centers. An additional \$20,000 for the project was donated by South Shore Health System.

The project kicked off in June of 2017 with an initial public meeting to collect input from abutters, business owners, and interested residents on existing conditions. The meeting was facilitated by Green International Affiliates and the nonprofit walk-advocacy organization, WalkBoston. Several conceptual designs were presented at that time, and residents and business owners expressed concerns about traffic flow, walking conditions, vehicle-to-pedestrian visibility, emergency vehicle accommodations, and on-street parking. The project's final conceptual design is intended to incorporate these concerns, resulting in a village center that is safer for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and will lead to revitalization.

To better inform the project, an on-the-ground traffic study was conducted this past summer by Green International Affiliates. The engineering firm worked closely with a group of Town staff and Columbian Square business owners to review traffic data and vet multiple design alternatives for improving mobility and safety operations throughout the square.

"The new design will allow smoother vehicle passage, enhanced pedestrian safety, and, we believe, a revitalized retail environment in Columbian Square, in an era of rapidly changing economic conditions," **said Planning and Community Development Director Robert Luongo.** "This is an exciting plan for Columbian Square, and we hope residents and business owners will feel the same."

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