

# THE BEACON HILL TIMES

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**Todisco to head Storrow Drive's landscape advisory committee** by Suzanne Besser

2/06/2007 - The proposed replacement or renovation of the Storrow Drive Tunnel will have a significant impact on the historic three-mile parkland along the Boston shore of the Charles River, so it was only fitting that Patrice Todisco, executive director of The Esplanade Association, which watches over that land, be given a key role in the planning process.

At a meeting last week, she was elected chairman of the Storrow Drive Tunnel Project's landscape advisory committee, a group of citizens and landscape architects that will work hand-in-hand with the project's Transportation Committee to determine the best way to redo the tunneled eastbound portion of the road that is said to be in poor condition and in need of repairs.

It is a mission she cares deeply about. "The project's design, construction and eventual completion will profoundly impact the lives of the many individuals who use the park daily," she said, "making it imperative to proceed with great care and a deep understanding of the park's history as well as its current and future use."

She said she was pleased to have committee members who have landscape experience to help make the decisions, and looks forward to moderating the committee's meetings, which will focus on construction, timing, traffic, traffic volumes — and how all this will impact the Esplanade. "We will have to find solutions that are palatable to the [Beacon Hill and Back Bay] neighborhoods," she said. "I suspect in the end it will be a series of compromises. The road has had an impact on the parkway for a long time. Whatever happens, it could be a better impact."

Todisco is well-suited for the job, having previously served as executive director of the Boston Greenspace Alliance, a private, nonprofit open-space advocacy, founded in 1984, that is dedicated to the protection, creation, care and use of Boston's parks and open spaces. In that role, she worked with the public on the landscape design of the parcels created in the downtown corridor as a result of the Central Artery project.

The committee includes thirteen individuals, including Beacon Hill's representatives Linda Cox, a founder of The Esplanade Association who was appointed by the Beacon Hill Civic Association, and Sharon Malt of the Beacon Hill Garden Club. Also serving on that committee are Philip Houck and Catherine Bordon of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay, Susan Barrow-Williams of Community Boating, Inc., Bob Corning of the Boston Society of Landscape Architects and Bob Sloane of Walk Boston.

Consultant to the Storrow Drive Tunnel Project is Nancy Farrell of Regina Villa Associates, a public relations firm on Franklin Street that specializes in managing and resolving complex public policy issues. She said a joint meeting of the landscape and transportation advisory committees would be held on February 28 to hear a presentation on construction phasing for each of the four options being considered for the tunnel renovation.