

Restoring the Agassiz Road Duck House

- Parkway links the East and West Fenway neighborhoods
- City of Boston property
- Out of use since the mid-1980s
- Designed by architect Alexander Longfellow and built in 1897, the building previously served as a bathroom facility.
- Emerald Necklace Masterplan calls for the restoration of historic structures in the park system



Media

Residents Seeking Duck House Rehab

by Jim Cronin
 Courier News Writer

Fenway residents voiced support to rehabilitate a former ranger station in the Back Bay Fens into a destination for park visitors.

Members of the Fenway Civic Association (FCA), along with elected officials and representatives of city agencies, presented ideas of how to renovate the granite Agassiz Road structure known as the "duck house" at the FCA's annual meeting on November 6.

Residents said they would like to see something at the location to make the area a more vibrant, exciting place for visitors and regular park users.

Those uses include a café, a bicycle rental shop, public bathroom facilities, an art gallery with works from the Fenway Studios artists or a combination of different uses. Some suggested outdoor seating and historic lighting in the immediate

area of the building.

Several who attended the meeting expressed a wish for the building's rehab to include bathroom facilities. One was Tina Hara, president of the Fenway Garden Society.

"We've got 500 to 700 people going through there pretty consistently," he said of the green trails who told in the Victory Gardens, adding that there are no restrooms in the park.

"If this area gets cleaned up, you're going to see a lot more people coming into the neighborhood," he said.

For some, that is the point. Residents described the project as a means to drive negative elements, like public drunkenness and drug use, out of the area.

"It could really be a game-changer to connect the East and West Fenway," said City Councilor Michael Ross.

Kathy Kottaridis, executive director of Historic Boston Incorporated, which works to preserve historic buildings in the

Vacant Fens Building May Get New Life

by Jim Cronin
 Courier News Writer

Public officials and a local real estate developer have joined neighborhood advocates to rehabilitate a long-vacant building in the Back Bay Fens.

The structure, located on Agassiz Road, has been closed since a fire damaged the roof and interior in 1966.

City Councilor Michael Ross met with Copley Group President Norman Levenson, representatives of the city's Parks Department, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and the Fenway Civic



Agassiz Road building

Association (FCA) at the building on May 12 to discuss possible uses.

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Duck House

Duck House Reuse Gets Closer to Reality

by Jim Cronin
 Courier News Writer

The duck house on Agassiz Road is one step closer to possible reuse in the Back Bay Fens, a park with few amenities for visitors.

Fenway Civic Association (FCA) members have been working to gather opinions from residents about potential uses, including a bicycle rental shop, a café or a restroom.

The city's Parks and Recreation

Department issued a Request for Expressions of Interest to gauge how many businesses would want to open in the former park ranger station.

Although the Parks Department has not received any official proposals for the Agassiz Road building, Andrew Prescott, chief wheel officer for Urban Adventures, which offers bicycle tours and repairs, said the company will propose establishing a bike tour and rental operation at the site.

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Fens Users Seek Café for the Park

by Jim Cronin
 Courier News Writer

A survey of Back Bay Fens users is making two things clear—they want a café, as well as more safety, in the park.

The Fenway Civic Association (FCA) is heading an effort to convert the "duck house" on Agassiz Road, an unused former ranger station, into a destination for park visitors.

Ideas to turn the site into a thriving part of the Fens include making it a café with outdoor tables, a bicycle and other sports equipment rental shop, a shop for garden-

ers who work in the park and nearby Victory Gardens, or an art gallery and gift shop. All uses include a unisex, handicap accessible public bathroom.

The FCA has started an online survey for residents to provide feedback on the best uses for the area, and has partnered with Wentworth Institute of Technology's Center for Community and Learning Partnerships to track the results.

Audrey Emerson, design coordinator at Wentworth who is tracking the survey results, said a café is the most popular idea among the more than 150 responses.

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Duck House Restoration Partners

Boston Bikes

Boston City Councilor Michael Ross

City of Boston Parks and Recreation Department

Emerald Necklace Conservancy

Fenway Alliance

Fenway Civic Association

Fenway CDC

Fenway Garden Society

Historic Boston, Inc.

MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

State Representative Byron Rushing

Samuels & Associates

State Senator Steven Tolman

The Copley Group

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Wentworth Institute of Technology Center for Community & Learning Partnerships

What could be...



Luxembourg Gardens, Paris, France



Botanical Garden, Lund, Sweden

Example of a Crêpe Stand in a Park



Luxembourg Gardens, Paris, France

The river may be dirty now...

Muddy River Restoration Project about to get underway will yield wonderful river views from the Duck House.



Ideas for use have included:

- Art gallery
- Bike repair/rental shop
- Café
- Garden supply shop

With minimal parking in the area, pedestrians and bicyclists are a likely customer base.



Site Usage

In November 2009, volunteers collected data for two days to identify levels of usage by:

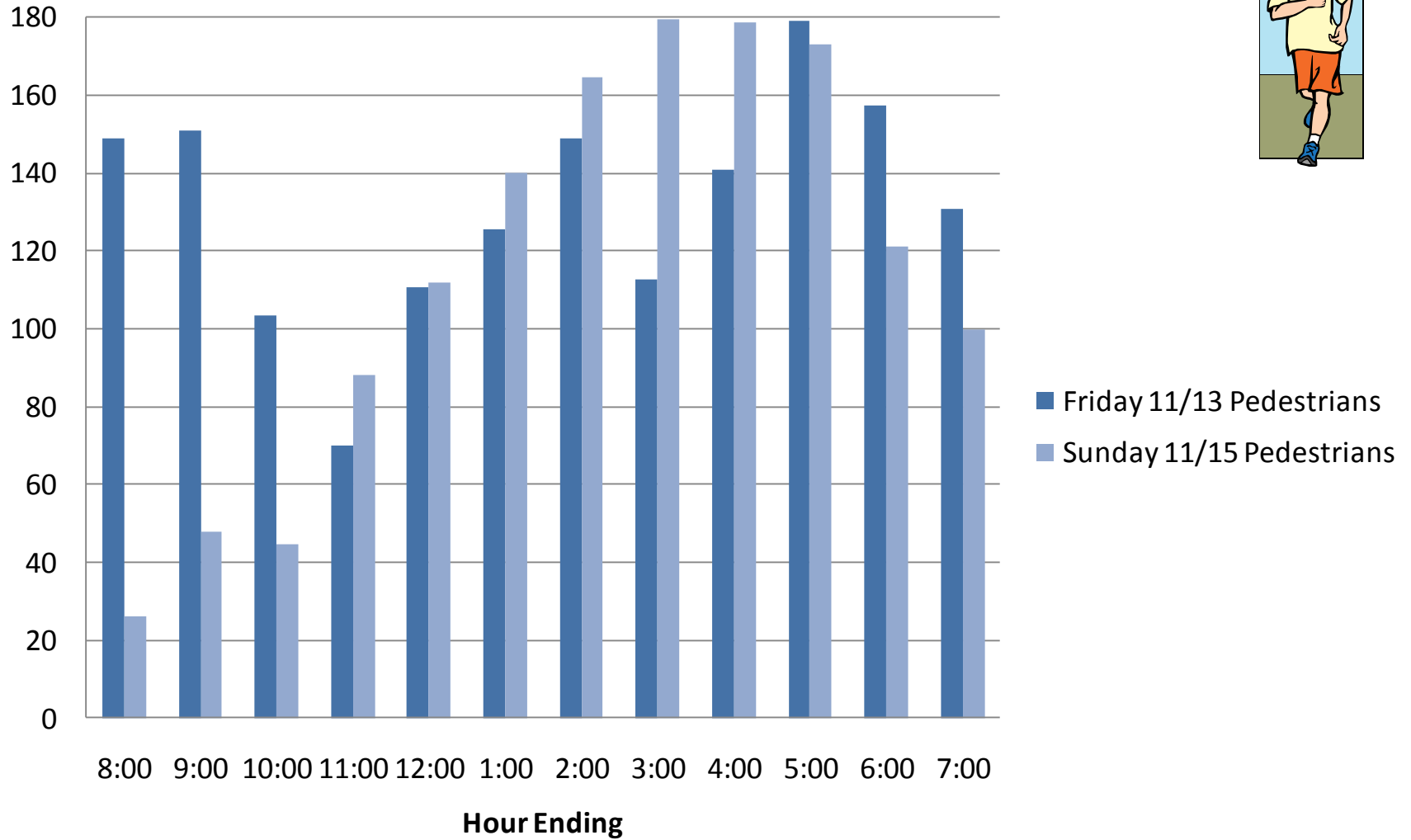
- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists
- Drivers.

Special thanks to the volunteers who contributed their time to this effort!

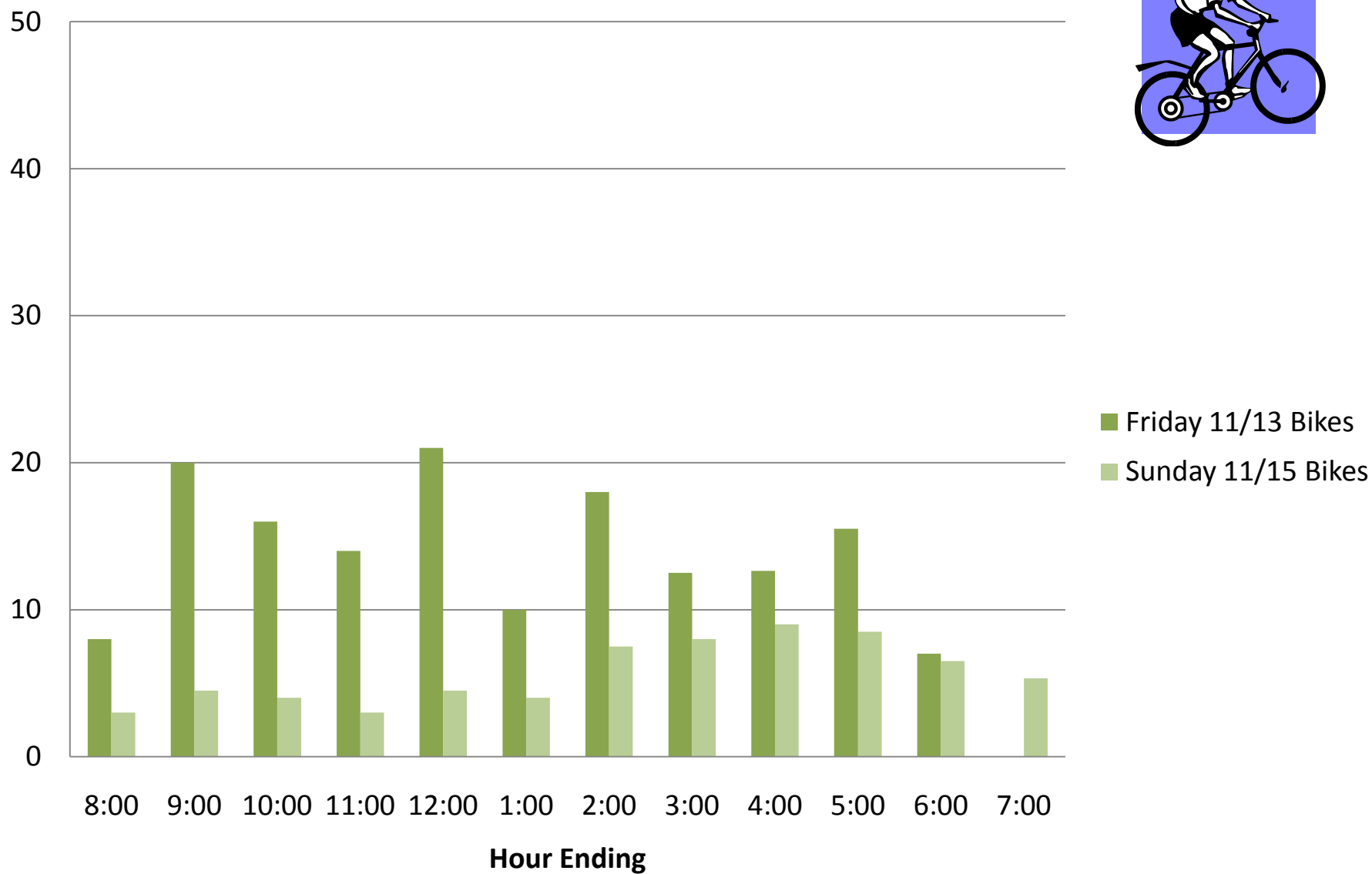


Agassiz Road at Duck House

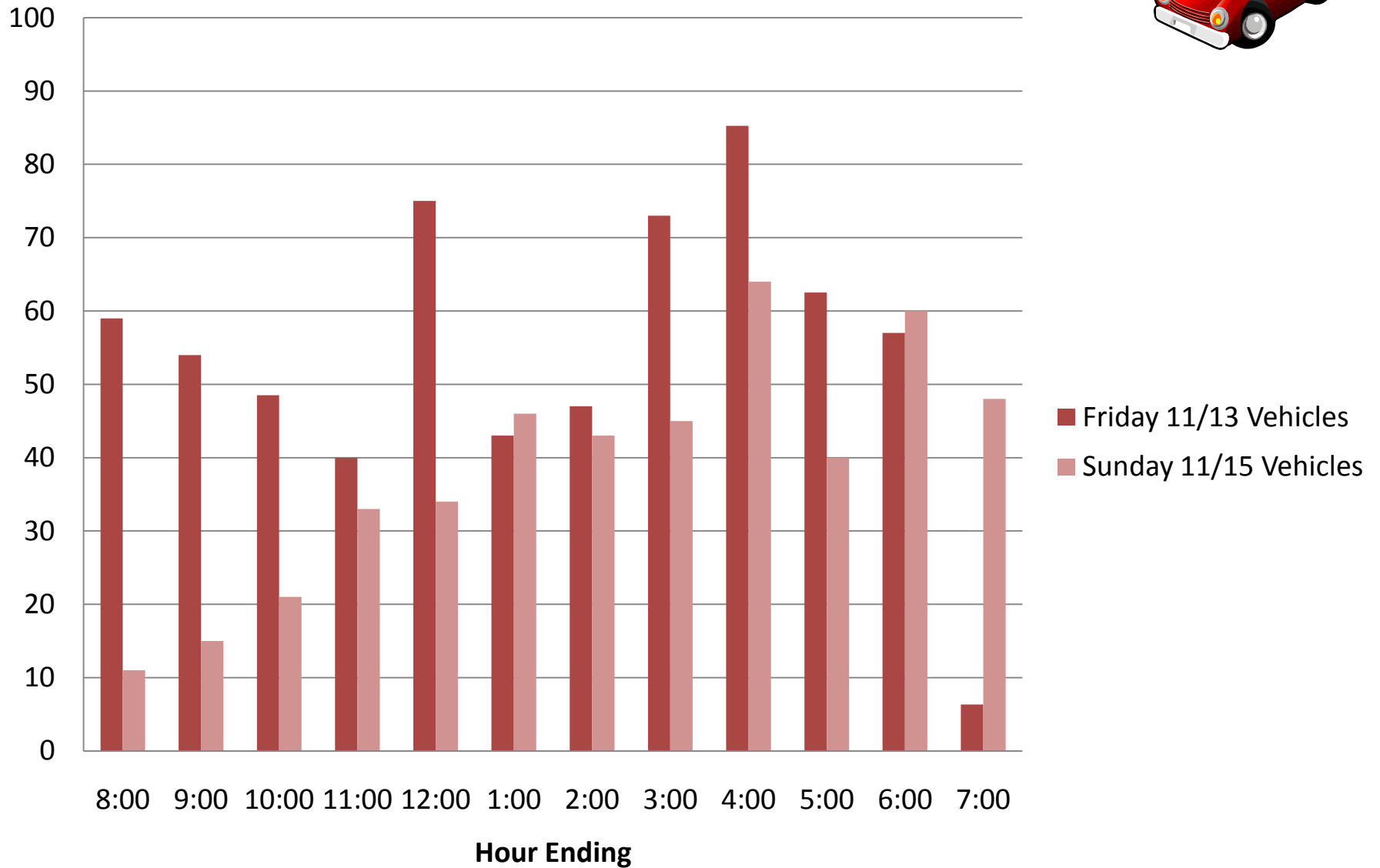
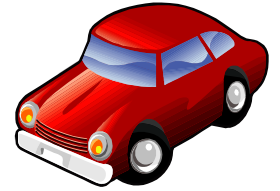
Pedestrian Count



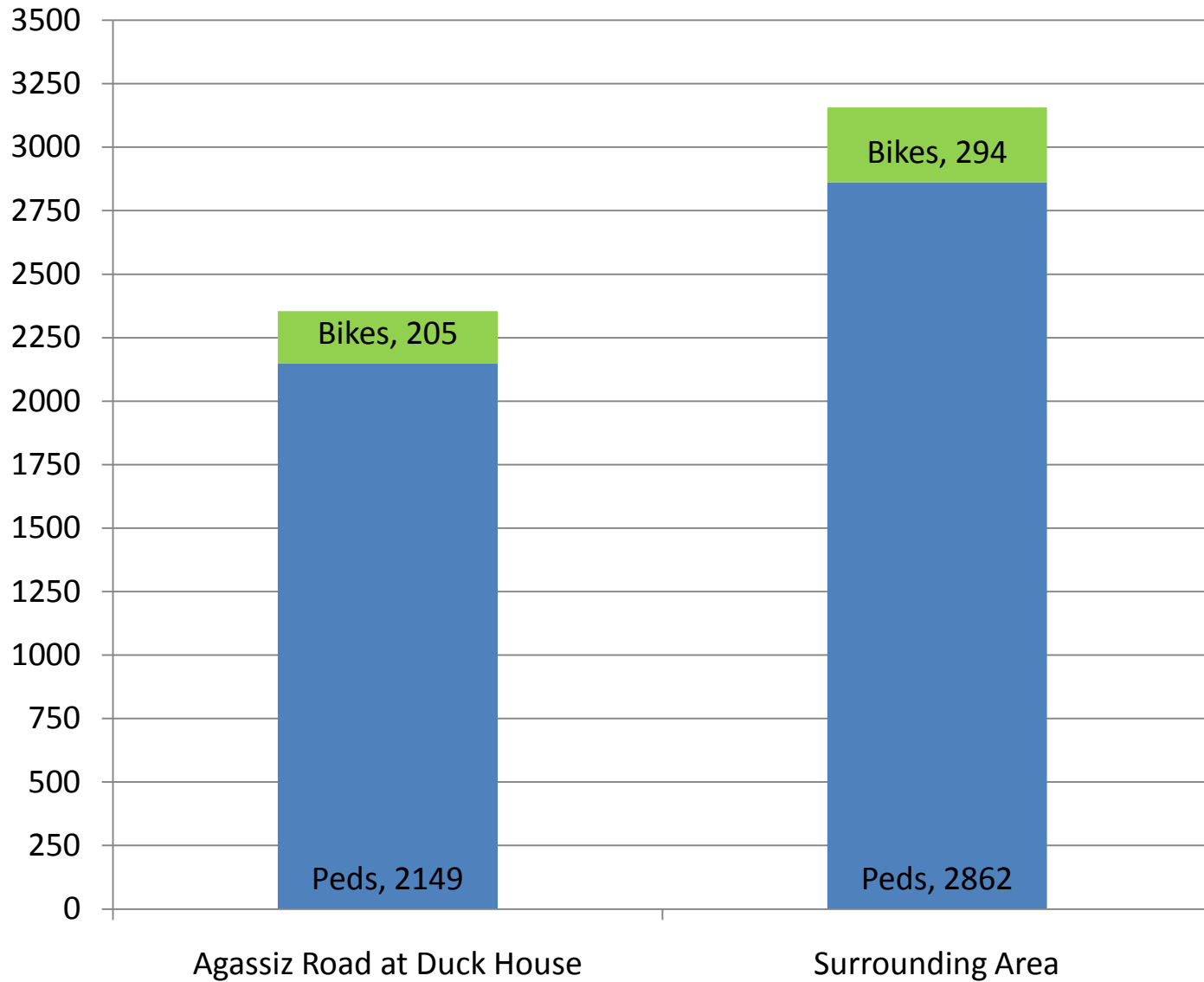
Agassiz Road at Duck House Bicycle Counts



Agassiz Road at Duck House Vehicle Counts - Friday 11/13/2009



Friday 11/13/2009 (12 Hr)



Before



Possible “After”



Created by Wentworth Institute of Technology Center for Community & Learning Partnerships



Recent Developments...

Long-Term Lease

Summer 2010: MA Legislature passes law enabling City of Boston to offer a long-term lease for the Duck House.

“AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION TO LEASE CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY UNDER ITS CONTROL AND OWNED BY THE CITY OF BOSTON”

Feasibility Study

In December 2010 Fenway Civic applied Matching Partnerships Grant from the Department of Conservation and Recreation for a feasibility study to identify a variety of transportation-related improvement opportunities for Agassiz Road.

We were selected! We raised over \$13,000 from the community, which was double-matched by DCR. The study will be conducted in spring/summer 2011.

Stay Tuned

For community events related to
Agassiz Road and the Duck House.

