

**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE #1, MAY 8, 2013
MEETING NOTES**

Date, Time & Place: May 8, 2013, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Cambridge Citywide Senior Center

Committee Members

Present: John Attanucci, Joseph Beggan, Kelley Brown, Miriam Cooper, Brian Dacey, John DiGiovanni, Jackie Douglas, Jim Gascoigne, Doug Manz, George Metzger, Susan Pacheco, Katherine Rafferty, Zachary Spitz, Simon Shapiro, Terrence Smith, Rev. Leslie K. Sterling, Charles Fineman, Robert Fitzgerald, Eric Hoke, Saul Tannenbaum, Ritesh Warade
Absent: Randa Ghattas, Jeffrey Lockwood

City of Cambridge

Susanne Rasmussen, Jeff Rosenblum, Amos Wright (Community Development Department)

About 8 members of the public were present.

1. WECLOME (Susanne Rasmussen)

Susanne welcomed the attendees, established the overall purpose and role of the advisory committee, and summarized mobility issues in the City of Cambridge.

Prominent themes: insufficient funding, transit access for seniors and other disabled/physically impaired populations. Anecdotal data: Huron Ave bus line ridership has increased exponentially since 2002. A member of the Central Square Advisory Committee expressed concern about trash left behind by commuters. Another committee member indicated that the Red Line is already the most efficient line in the system, and that MassDOT and the MBTA should focus on Green Line and Orange Line service.

2. Guest Speaker: Lizzi Weyant, Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA), “The Future of Transportation Funding in Massachusetts”

Lizzi presented an abridged history of the transportation budgetary crisis:

- Big Dig – total cost of \$24 billion with interest payments.
- 2000: Forward funding forced MBTA to stay within budget, but sales tax revenues weren't realized leaving the MBTA unable to balance its budget.
- 2008: Independent study projected \$15-19 billion needed for capital maintenance of our transportation system to return it to a “state of good repair.”
- “Reform before revenue” in 2009 led to transportation reform legislation which consolidated and streamlined transportation agencies.
- 2012: Drastic MBTA fare hikes and service reductions proposed, but not carried out because of an infusion of funds from the legislature.
- 2013: \$13 billion 10-year investment plan from MassDOT
- House and Senate Transportation Bills, how they differ (H3415 and S1170)
- Tax plan: increased income tax, reduced sales tax, 5% increased tolls every two years, gas tax increased by 3 cents, gas tax indexed to inflation.
- Own-source revenue targets
 - Senate bill raises more revenue
 - House bill raises an average of \$500 million per annum for transportation, whereas the Senate bill raises an average of \$600 million per annum.

- Concern that some revenue sources could fall short of projections
- Own-source revenue targets could be too high, thereby triggering service cuts, fare hikes, etc.

Q&A Session

- How much will MassDOT and MBTA have to raise in revenue? Answer: FY18 1/3 of budget with statutory limit on 5% fare increase every 2 years.
- What happens if own-source revenue targets are not met? Answer: raise tolls, fares, implement efficiencies, etc.
- What should candidates for state representatives be asked?
- Does this change the T’s bonding/borrowing capacity? Answer: No.
- Why the unrealistic own-source revenue targets?

3. Workshop: Analysis of Transit in Cambridge (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), led by Jeff Rosenblum

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit exists • mostly punctual • real-time data, apps • Hubway • Easy bus/subway transfer with one ticket • Easy to navigate • Express service on commuter rail • Convenience • Open data GIS information • Effective core service • Enables econ growth • CEMUSA shelters clean and professional • Improved Accessibility since 2006 • Red Line • Some bus lines have frequent service • Trackless trolleys • Countdown displays in subway • Number of busroutes • EZ Ride shuttle • affordability compared to other systems • Clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lechmere Station crossing to other side – people run across tracks • Complexity of Central Sq and Harvard Sq bus stops (upstairs/down) • Wayfinding is lacking (and what is inbound?) • No easy toilet facility at Harvard Sq bus stops • Old trains and buses • Red Line shutdown • Underfunding • Bad headways • Last mile service • Missing links • Lack of redundancy/ parallel tracks • Difference of various lines • No 24/7 service • Headways lengthen outside the urban core • Poor station maintenance • Poor system maintenance • Not enough focus on bus service • Red Line headways long • Overcrowding • Bus bunching • Central Square bus connection problems • Red Line capacity • Hours of Operation • Bus delays due to mixed traffic, non-peak service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coalitions to promote change • Local & integrated apps (Hubway, car share) • Advertising opportunities to raise revenue • Designated bus lanes • Educate public to be smarter users • Arrival information • Better marketing • U-pass • Turn riders into lobbyists • Design roadways for buses • More BRT with dedicated right-of-way, • Improve headways • Clean stations • Repairs to increase confidence • Fix Central square • Leverage tracking of transit/technology • Intersection priority through upgrade of traffic signal system • Station Bike storage • Use Grand Junction Quiet electric buses • More frequent review of bus routes/ destinations, load/ discharge times • New rolling stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of infrastructure • Risk of complete shutdown • Funding/escalating costs • Age of decrepit equipment • Greater demand that cannot be provided for • More cars/ traffic congestion • Funding • Safety • Red Line tunnel construction • What would happen if the Red Line shuts down • Hinder economic growth • Environmental issues for system expansion • NIMBYISM

4. Public Comment

Public transit is competing with paratransit and private services – should collaborate with public transit services, institutional stakeholders, etc.

Audience member Steve Kaiser delineated a privately funded study comparing Tokyo “hardware” with Red Lines arrival times, departures, and headways. He indicated that the Red Line has large and unpredictable headway ranges between 2-12 minutes; ostensibly, the headway should be 4 minutes. He is finalizing a report on the Red Line, and will share it with the committee.

Audience member Robert La Trémouille made claims of disinformation campaign by the City of Cambridge regarding the urban ring project, asserting that there are two alternatives to the Urban Ring, not one.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.